



**2015-2022**

# STRATEGIC PLAN OF GEF-CSO NETWORK

## **Overview**

**(FINAL 2 June 2015)**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

## PAGE

### PREAMBLE

1.	Vision and Mission	1
2.	Background	1
3.	Emerging Environmental Issues	2
4.	Objectives and Strategies	3
5.	Key Activities	4
Annex 1	Action Plan (2015-2018)	7

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CC	Coordinating Committee
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CFP	Central Focal Point
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECW	Expanded Constituency Workshop
GCN	GEF-CSO Network
RFP	Regional Focal Point
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF IEO	GEF Independent Evaluation Office
GEFSEC	GEF Secretariat
IPOs	Indigenous Peoples Organisations
IPAG	Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Group
IPFPs	Indigenous Peoples' Focal Points
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSP	Medium Sized Project
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PIP	Public Involvement Policy
STAR	System for Transparent Allocation of Resources
SP	Strategic Plan
SGP	Small Grant Programme
WG	Working Group

## **PREAMBLE**

This Strategic Plan lays out the vision and targets for the GEF CSO network in the GEF 6 and GEF 7 periods (between 2015-2022). It builds on the earlier strategic plan that was developed by the GEF-CSO Network (GCN) for 2008-2018. The Network has reviewed and updated the plan at its mid-point of implementation. The review has taken into consideration experience with the earlier plan as well as the GEF reforms, including the new GEF2020 Strategy and the successes and challenges of the Network. The plan preparation has been facilitated by the Network Strategic and Planning Subcommittee. The Plan responds to key areas of opportunity and concern which were identified during the internal assessment and evaluation exercise undertaken by the Network Coordination Committee on 24-25 Oct 2014. Inputs have also been drawn from several processes including the CSO Forum before the GEF Assembly in May 2014 and various regional CSO meetings and the GEF ECW Meetings. Inputs and comments have been received from member organisations and other stakeholders. The plan was adopted by the Network Coordination Committee on 2 June 2015.

## 1. VISION AND MISSION

The Vision and Mission of the Network are as follows:

Vision:

***"A dynamic civil society influencing policies and actions at all levels to safeguard the global environment and promote sustainable development"***

The civil society impact is critical with the emphasis on empowerment of indigenous and local communities in defense of their rights over natural resources and valuing their indigenous knowledge

Mission:

***"To safeguard the global environment through strengthening civil society partnership with GEF by enhancing informed participation, contributing to policy development and stimulating local action ."***

## 2. BACKGROUND

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Civil Society (GEF-CSO) Network (formerly known as the GEF-NGO Network) was established in May, 1995. It followed a GEF Council decision to establish a formal dialogue and partnership between NGOs worldwide and the GEF Secretariat, the GEF Council, the GEF Assembly and various partner agencies. The GEF-CSO Network is currently made up of approximately 460 member organisations from all around the world whose work in environment and sustainable development is aligned with the GEF mandate.

The GEF CSO Network focuses in enhancing the engagement of Civil Society in the work of the GEF. It primarily works by channeling feedback on GEFs policies and procedures to the GEF council in its biennial meetings. It also is increasingly working with its member organisations at regional level to enhance engagement in projects and programs at country and regional level. The GEF-CSO Network is overseen by a global Coordination Committee composed of focal points from 16 different geographic regions and representatives of Indigenous People's Organizations (IPOs). The Coordinating Committee (CC) is the overall governance body of the network and comprises the Regional Focal Points (RFPs), Indigenous Peoples Focal Points (IPFPs) and a Central Focal Point (CFP) and representatives from IPOs. It meets twice a year prior to each GEF council meeting. It has established several sub-committees to assist with Governance, outreach, Strategy and Convention linkages. The sub-committees facilitate inputs from member organizations to policy making and implementation. The leadership of the sub-committees is distributed to members of the CC with relevant expertise. The overall work of the Network is coordinated by an elected Central Focal Point (CFP) while Regional Focal Points (RFPs) coordinate activities at regional level.

The Strategic Plan for GCN for the period 2015 – 2022 provides the focused mission, objectives and strategies, which are directed towards ensuring the development of a sustainable operation of the Network during the GEF6 (2014-2018) and GEF7 (2018-2022) cycles.

One challenge facing the Network if it wants to expand its current work is the issue of resources. The network is primarily supported by voluntary contributions of time and expenses

from Network members with small contributions of funds from the GEF Secretariat and the GEF CSO voluntary Fund. In order to enhance its activities in the coming years there is a need to generate additional resources to support enhancement of network functions.

Among the Network's achievements are to

- Since 1996, organise CSO consultations twice a year prior to the GEF Council meetings and a CSO Forum during the GEF Assemblies
- Actively contribute to policy formulation by GEF with inputs included in many policy decisions.
- Organise CSO meetings at regional level in association with Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECWs).
- Support the development of GEF Principles and Guidelines on the engagement with Indigenous Peoples
- Complete a review of the implementation of the GEF Public Involvement Policy, which gave input to the development of the new Guidelines by GEF.
- Contribute actively to the development of GEF 5 and GEF 6 Focal Area Strategies and Replenishment processes.
- Played a key role in the establishment of the GEF SGP and MSP mechanism.
- Act as a conduit for feedback on both positive and negative aspects of GEF implementation

### **3. EMERGING ISSUES**

The following section highlights the strategic issues that GCN will consider or endeavour to address in the revised strategic plan:

- Continuing and increasing global environmental challenges (including climate disasters, land degradation, biodiversity loss and increasing chemical pollution).
- The adoption of the GEF 2020 Strategy which calls for a more integrated multi-sectoral approach to safeguarding the global environment including addressing drivers as well as impacts.
- The growing trend for integrated multifocal area programmes in the GEF portfolio to be balanced with the continued relevance of the Core GEF related conventions.
- The growing importance of GEF Operational Focal Points (OFPs) at country level in the identification of projects and allocation of resources.
- The continuing challenges for the effective engagement of CSOs in GEF projects and programmes and declining GEF resources to support CSO led activities.
- The need to improve engagement of GCN members in the activities of the network including enhancing activities at regional and country level
- The broadening of GEF agencies to include CSOs offers new opportunities for CSO engagement in GEF programmes.
- The declining resources to support the activities of the GCN necessitating enhanced efforts to soliciting for financial and in-kind support to meet administrative and operational requirements.
- The need to strengthen GCN Secretariat: to improve the capacity of the secretariat to support the formulation and implementation of the network's programmes.

## 4.0 OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

The Network has set three strategic objectives and related strategies for the period 2015-2022.

**Table 1: Objectives and Strategies**

	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategies</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>To enhance the role of civil society in safeguarding the global environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support outreach and awareness on global environment issues.</li> <li>▪ Encourage CSO contributions to the implementation of the conventions.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<b>To promote effective engagement of Civil Society in GEF operations.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide input to GEF policy making, planning and reviews.</li> <li>▪ Enhance CSO involvement in GEF country, regional and global projects and programs.</li> <li>▪ Strengthen partnership with SGP.</li> <li>▪ Develop meaningful partnership with GEF agencies in project planning, implementation and evaluation.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<b>To strengthen the capacity of the Network and CSO members to participate in GEF-related activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthen the operational and financial governance of the Network.</li> <li>▪ Enhance knowledge sharing and management.</li> <li>▪ Enhance effectiveness of regional and national level activities for network members.</li> <li>▪ Strengthen capacity of CSOs to engage in GEF-related activities.</li> <li>▪ Enhance CSO involvement in monitoring and evaluation of GEF program/projects.</li> </ul>

## 5.0 KEY ACTIVITIES

The key activities of the envisaged strategies are elaborated in more detail below:

**Table 2: Key Activities of Envisaged Strategies**

<b>Objective #1</b>		
<b>Enhance the role of civil society in safeguarding the global environment</b>		
	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Activities</b>
1.1	Support outreach and awareness on global environment issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote outreach programs and campaigns to raise awareness on emerging key global environment issues in partnership with GEF, Network members and other CSO/IP Networks</li> <li>• Disseminate the GEF 2020 Strategy and other key documents to the CSO community.</li> <li>• Collate and disseminate results and lessons learned through GEF and non-GEF related activities.</li> </ul>
1.2	Encourage civil society contributions to the negotiation and implementation of Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To promote effective participation of civil society organisations in negotiation and implementation of environmental conventions.</li> <li>▪ Organise regular dialogues at convention meetings in partnership with GEF Secretariat and Agencies, network members and other partners.</li> <li>▪ Channel ground level experiences from GEF programs with civil society to convention meetings and implementation processes</li> </ul>

<b>Objective #2</b>		
<b>To promote effective engagement of Civil Society in GEF operations.</b>		
	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Activities</b>
2.1	Provide input to GEF policy making, planning and reviews.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Facilitate input to the GEF policy making through contributions to council, constituency and technical meetings</li> <li>▪ Engage actively with GEF Council to ensure issues related to civil society are considered in council decision-making.</li> <li>▪ Work with GEF to support development and effective implementation of GEF policies related to civil society including the Public Involvement Policy (PIP), gender mainstreaming policy and Guideline for engagement with IPs.</li> <li>▪ Contribute to operation of GEF related task forces on focal areas and conventions.</li> </ul>

2.2	Enhance CSO involvement in GEF country, regional and global projects and programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop and maintain a registry of effective CSO project partners</li> <li>▪ Support effective CSO engagement in GEF related fora (ECW, National Portfolio Formulation Exercises, GEF Assembly, Council Consultations).</li> <li>▪ Work with GEF Focal points and GEF Agencies to identify and disseminate information on opportunities for civil society involvement in the preparation and implementation of GEF projects and programs.</li> <li>▪ Promote and facilitate the inclusion of Civil Society representatives in country program consultations and GEF project and program governance mechanisms.</li> </ul>
2.3	Strengthen partnership with the GEF Small Grants programme (SGP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop a formal partnership agreement with SGP.</li> <li>▪ Participate actively in global SGP Steering Committee, SGP regional planning meetings and as appropriate, in national steering committees.</li> <li>▪ Undertake joint activities with SGP at national and international levels such as the CSO-Government dialogue platform and knowledge fairs.</li> </ul>
2.4	Develop meaningful partnership with GEF agencies in project planning, implementation and evaluation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhance communication between Network and GEF Agencies.</li> <li>▪ Develop partnerships with GEF agencies to enhance CSO engagement.</li> </ul>

<b>Objective #3</b>		
<b>To strengthen the capacity of Network and CSO members to participate in GEF-related activities</b>		
	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Activities</b>
3.1	Strengthen the operational and financial governance of the Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthen the capacity of the Network secretariat and at regional level.</li> <li>▪ Enhance communication and outreach for the Network.</li> <li>▪ Secure adequate resources for the Network from GEF, international donors and partners.</li> </ul>
3.2	Enhance knowledge sharing and management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthen capacity of members in knowledge management.</li> <li>▪ Develop a knowledge exchange platform on civil society engagement on safeguarding the global environment</li> <li>▪ Collate, document and disseminate results and lessons learned through GEF/SGP and non-GEF related activities to address key environmental challenges.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contribute to the GEF knowledge management activities.</li> </ul>
3.3	Enhance effectiveness of regional and national level activities for network members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintain and strengthen membership base</li> <li>▪ Strengthen communication within and across local, regional and international levels</li> <li>▪ Organise regional meetings of CSOs on regular basis</li> <li>▪ Enhance network activities at country level in cooperation with members and GEF Political and Operational Focal Points.</li> </ul>
3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthen capacity of CSOs to engage in GEF-related activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organise periodic training and other capacity building activities for CSOs/IPs in partnership with GEF agencies and projects</li> <li>▪ Facilitate CSO involvement in design and implementation for GEF projects</li> </ul>
3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhance CSO involvement in monitoring and evaluation of GEF programs/projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhance linkages between the Network and the GEF Independent Evaluation Office to contribute to the evaluation of projects, distill best practices and make the evaluation process more transparent and accountable.</li> <li>▪ Develop capacity of members and mechanism for engagement to assist in M&amp;E of GEF program/projects at regional and local level</li> </ul>

## 6.0 IMPLEMENTATION

Specific Action plans will be developed to focus implementation of the Strategy. The Action Plan for the remainder of the GEF6 period covering 2015-2018 is in **Annex 1**.

The Network will implement the plans through voluntary contributions from the member organisations – combined with specific projects and activities supported by GEF, The GEF NGO Voluntary Fund and direct contributions from donors and supporters.

## 7.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

This strategic plan will be reviewed and updated formally in 2018 (prior to GEF 7) and an Action plan for GEF 7 will be developed. The implementation will be monitored by the Network Planning and Strategy Sub-committee.

## ANNEX 1. ACTION PLAN (2015-2018)

Objective (s)	Strategies	Key Action (s)	Output (s)	Time frame (20xx)			
				15	16	17	18
<b>To enhance the role of civil society in safeguarding the global environment</b>	1.1 Support outreach and awareness on global environment issues	Support members to undertake outreach programs and campaigns on emerging key global environment issues in partnership with GEF, Network members and other CSO/IP Networks	Outreach programs documented.		x	x	x
	1.2 Encourage civil society contributions to the negotiation and implementation of Conventions	Participate in and facilitate CSO input to Expert Group on CBD Funding Needs Assessment for GEF7	CBD GEF 7 Funding needs assessment report	x	x	x	
		Organise collaborative activities at the time of key convention meetings	Enhanced understanding				
<b>To promote effective engagement of Civil Society in GEF operations.</b>	2.1 Provide strategic input to GEF policy making, planning and reviews	Participate actively in IPAG and WG on Public involvement Strategy (PIP) implementation and WG on Gender.	IPs and CSOs participation enhanced	x	x	x	x
		Monitor and report on Implementation of the PIP	Enhanced implementation of PIP		x	x	x
		Input to GEF7 Focal Area Strategies and Replenishment Process	Ambitious GEF7 replenishment and CSO issues integrated in GEF Focal Area				x

Objective (s)	Strategies	Key Action (s)	Output (s)	Time frame (20xx)			
				15	16	17	18
	2.2 Enhance CSO involvement in GEF Country, regional and global projects and programs to enhance timely effectiveness and sustainable implementation	Active CSO input into GEF Council meetings	Strategies CSO issues included in council decisions				
		Convene consultative workshops prior to GEF Council meetings	Strategic input provided to GEF Council meetings	x	x	x	x
		CSO Forum organized before GEF Assembly	Active CSO input to Assembly deliberations				x
		Organise Regional CSO meetings prior to ECWs in all recipient country regions	Enhanced capacity and plans for regional activities.	x	x	x	
		Develop practical manual for CSO engagement at country level	capacity for CSO engagement enhanced				x x
		Develop "report card" for GEF countries and Agencies on their engagement with civil society	Trends in CSO engagement documented				x x
		Develop and maintain a registry of effective CSO thematic area experts and CSO project partners.	Enhanced opportunities for CSO engagement.				x x

Objective (s)	Strategies	Key Action (s)	Output (s)	Time frame (20xx)			
				15	16	17	18
	2.3 Strengthen partnership with SGP.	Regular planning and collaboration meetings with SGP	Structured engagement	x	x	x	x
		Active engagement in SGP Steering Committee and regional planning	Strengthened SGP	x	x	x	x
		Establish CSO-government policy platforms for selected countries.	CSO-government policy platforms established.	x	x	x	x
		Collaborate on production of knowledge management materials	Joint Knowledge management materials produced.	x	x	x	x
	2.4 Develop meaningful partnership with GEF agencies in project planning, implementation and evaluation	Explore opportunities with GEF CSO agencies on enhancing CSO engagement	Specific joint initiatives with CSO Agencies	x	x	x	x
		Joint projects with selected GEF Agencies on knowledge sharing and capacity building of CSOs	Enhanced CSO capacity		x	x	

Objective (s)	Strategies	Key Action (s)	Output (s)	Time frame (20xx)			
				15	16	17	18
<b>To strengthen the capacity of Network and CSO members to participate in GEF-related activities</b>	3.1 Strengthen the operations, finances and governance of the Network	Review and revise network rules and structures	Strengthen Network Secretariat function, and governance	x	x	x	
		Secure funding support from potential supporters	Enhanced and more effective programs	x	x	x	x
	3.2 Enhance knowledge sharing and management	Participate actively in GEF Knowledge Management WG	Enhanced GEF KM Strategy	x	x	x	
		Develop and disseminate quarterly GEF-CSO Network Newsletter	Enhanced understanding of Network activities	x	x	x	x
	3.3 Enhance effectiveness of regional and national level activities for network members	Strengthen Network membership	Number, distribution and capacity of membership enhanced	x	x	x	x
		Establish mechanisms for operation at country level	Enhanced activities at country level countries in pilot countries	x	x	x	x
	3.4 Strengthen capacity of CSOs to engage in GEF-Related activities.	Organise training programs to enhance capacity	Four regional TOT workshops		x	x	
	3.5 Enhance CSO involvement in monitoring and evaluation of GEF programs/projects	Joint capacity building with GEF IEO	Joint TOT workshop			x	