



## **GEF CSO Network Statement**

### **Agenda item 7: Improving the GEF Project Cycle 47<sup>th</sup> GEF Council Meeting, Washington DC, USA**

The GEF CSO Network welcomes the document GEF/C.47/07 in general and we strongly believe that there is a need to improve the GEF project cycle in light of the many recent global environmental changes (post 2015 agenda, SDGs, etc.) and in the light of the GEF 2020 and the policy recommendations from GEF-6 replenishment.

The GEF project cycle is a process involving many partners such as countries, GEF Agencies, GEF Secretariat, and GEF Council. However, the document does not refer to the requirement in the public involvement Policy (and associated guidelines which are an information paper for this council meeting) for the engagement of the civil society as a key player that needs to be involved throughout all phases of the projects cycle (Projects idea, concept preparation, monitoring and cancellation).

The GEF CSO Network welcomes the proposed update of the eight proposed changes to refine the programmatic approach. However, we kindly emphasise the importance of inclusion of the engagement of CSOs in the consultation with the countries and agencies that will be undertake upstream on the concept as mentioned in step (B).

We welcome cancellation policy as it will give an incentive to complete design on time. However when there is a potential cancellation information should be provided to the related stakeholders including CSOs and assistance sought from stakeholders to expedite completion.

We believe that there is a need to simplify or speed up the PIF formulation exercise as well as the need for cross reference to the new more flexible co-financing policy (agreed last council meeting) which may save a lot of time in project preparation process. In addition, there is a need for building capacity at national country level to understand the process. CSOs can play a key role in capacity building as well.

The value of consultation and engagement with CSOs is that they have experience, passion for environment on voluntary basis, institutional memory, grass root experience and CSOs can easily identify local environmental benefits.

Last but not least, we welcome the two types of the programs i.e. thematic and geographical programs but we hardly see the inclusion of civil society engagement as stated in the current text in the document.

We kindly ask the council to seriously look at this matter and find the best way to ensure the adequate engagement of civil society in the GEF Project Cycle – either through reference in this document or updating of the Public involvement policy and associated guidance.