

VISION:

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

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.



NETWORK FOCAL AREAS:

- Biodiversity
- Climate Change
- International Waters
- Land Degradation
- Ozone Depletion
- Persistent Organic Pollutants

INTRODUCTION:

The GEF-CSO Network (formerly known as GEF-NGO) was established in May 1995 following the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council's decision to enhance relationships between the GEF and Civil Society Organizations (CSO).

The Network is made up of CSOs whose work in environment and sustainable development is aligned with the GEF mandate. It has a global organizational structure with Regional Focal Points based in sixteen (16) different regions overseen by a global Coordination Committee (including representatives of Indigenous Peoples). The Committee is led by a Chair and Vice Chair and supported by a Secretariat.

The Network currently links member organizations in all regions of the world. Its role is expanding from focusing mainly on input to GEF planning and policymaking to one of empowering the engagement of civil society in the implementation of GEF programs.

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Since 1996, the Network has organized consultations twice a year prior to the GEF Council meetings and has also actively contributed to policy formulation by GEF.

Played a key role in the establishment of the GEF Small Grants Program (SGP) and the Medium Sized Project mechanism (MSP).

Supported the development of GEF Principles and Guidelines on the engagement with Indigenous Peoples which promotes inclusion and respect of the rights of Indigenous Peoples in GEF projects.

A conduit for feedback on both positive and negative aspects of GEF implementation and has compiled case studies of practical experiences and best practices in implementing GEF activities at the country and local levels.

Successfully helped to enhance recognition of the importance of working with civil society to address global environment objectives.

Actively contributed to successful Fifth and Sixth Replenishment of the GEF and revived the Voluntary NGO Trust Fund to act as a funding mechanism to support the Network.

Successfully pushed for review of the 1996 GEF Public involvement Policy, resulting in development of Guidelines and establishment of PIP Working Group.

OBJECTIVES

1. To enhance the role of civil society in safeguarding the global environment.
2. To promote effective engagement of Civil Society in GEF operations.
3. To strengthen the capacity of the Network and CSO members to participate in GEF-related activities.



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STRATEGIES:

1. To enhance the role of civil society in safeguarding the global environment:

- Support outreach and awareness on global environment issues.
- Encourage CSO contributions to the implementation of the conventions.

2. To promote effective engagement of Civil Society in GEF operations:

- Provide input to GEF policy making, planning and reviews.
- Enhance CSO involvement in GEF country, regional and global projects and programs.
- Strengthen partnership with SGP.
- Develop meaningful partnership with GEF agencies in project planning, implementation and evaluation.

3. To strengthen the capacity of the Network and CSO members to participate in GEF-related activities:

- Strengthen the operational and financial governance of the Network.
- Enhance knowledge sharing and management.
- Enhance effectiveness of regional and national level activities for network members.
- Strengthen capacity of CSOs to engage in GEF-related activities.
- Enhance CSO involvement in monitoring and evaluation of GEF program/projects.

MEMBERSHIP:

As of Sept 2016, there are more than 500 member organizations in the Network.

Benefits: by becoming members of the Network, organizations are able to:

- Receive updates on policies and activities of the GEF and the Network;
- Be notified of funding and capacity building opportunities, as well as upcoming meetings and events;
- Contribute to GEF policy and program development and review;
- Exchange experiences with other members of the Network and participate in GEF-CSO consultation meetings and GEF Assembly meetings.

Obligations: Members are expected to be actively involved and contribute to the work of the Network by:

- Sharing their knowledge and experiences with other members
- Contributing to the achievement of the Network objectives
- Participation in working groups or task forces

Non-profit, civil society organizations actively working on GEF-related issues can apply for membership (details are on the website).

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