

Draft Summary Report by Civil Society Organizations Regional Consultation Meeting for West Asia and North Africa, February 13-14, 2012, Amman, Jordan

Thirty six CSO representatives from 15 countries (as in participant list in **Annex 1**) attended a Regional CSO consultation meeting for West Asia and North Africa on 13-14 February 2012, immediately prior to the Expanded Constituency Workshop (ECW) for the same region. The meeting was organized by GEF NGO Network in conjunction with Jordan Environment Society and supported by the GEF NGO Voluntary Fund. The meeting discussed a range of issues relating to the development and implementation of GEF projects and programmes in the region and 12 presentations on different aspects were made (as per agenda in **Annex 2**). Specific discussion groups were organized to discuss the needs and options to strengthen the work of CSOs to address global environment issues in the regions and enhance the functioning of the GEF NGO Network. A dialogue was held with the GEF CEO, Monique Barbut.

Key issues raised in the presentations and associated discussions included the following:

The structure and functioning of GEF and the GEF NGO Network was described. The GEF allocation to countries in the region for GEF 5 of \$191 million was highlighted with the largest allocations to Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and Egypt. It was noted that additional funds are available for International Waters, chemicals and (through the LDCF and SCCF) for climate change adaptation. The meeting was informed that there are 36 Network members in the 15 countries on the region and the members have elected Regional Focal Points (RFPs) to represent them at global level and to facilitate actions in the region. Currently RFPs are in Egypt (North Africa) , Pakistan (South Asia). The West Asia Region is currently under review./reorganization.

Presentations were made by the two existing Network RFPs on the nature and status of the environmental challenges in the region and a summary of issues and experience from CSO involvement in GEF was highlighted.

Opportunities for CSO involvement in GEF were described including: policy input (especially to the GEF Council); input to GEF project identification and design; Project implementation (SGP, MSP, FSP); acting as project partners or service providers or project advisers/steering committee members; Facilitating engagement of indigenous and local communities and other project target groups; monitoring and enhancing CSO access to GEF resources.

A briefing was given on the main GEF policies related to civil society including: the GEF Public Involvement Policy; GEF Policy on Minimum Agency Environmental and Social Standards; and the GEF Gender Policy. Information was also given on the process to develop a GEF Policy guidelines on involvement of indigenous peoples in GEF.

A range of presentations and case studies were given in relation to the GEF Small Grants Programme and the experience of CSOs in various countries including Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine and Syria.

Breakout groups were organized to discuss the needs and options to strengthen the work of CSOs to address global environment issues in the regions and enhance the functioning of the GEF NGO Network.

Challenges

Some of the challenges to the effective operation of environment related CSOs in the region were identified as:

- Weak cooperation between CSOs and their respective governments
- Lack of democratic and enabling environment in many countries
- Weak institutional infrastructure for many CSOs and poor capacity in many organisations to undertake their mission
- Culture of volunteerism is at low level in some countries
- Lack of cooperation between CSOs at the country level
- No clear system for CSO to participate with GEF

The main conclusions were:

- There is significant experience in CSOs in the region in development and implementation of GEF projects – both SGP and full sized projects
- CSOs have great experience in outreach and engagement of local communities as well as technical areas related to all GEF focal areas.
- In most countries in the region –historically there has been little direct involvement of CSOs in the development of country plans and projects.
- The Small grants programme has been important in many countries to support CSOs but there have been few opportunities of involvement of CSOs in medium and full sized projects.
- There is not enough coordination between CSOs and Government and few joint projects.
- Meetings between GEF Focal Points - CSOs regular are not being organised in most countries and until recently there has been no option for regional CSO meetings.

Recommendations

A range of recommendations to overcome the challenges were identified including:

- Enhance the collaboration between environmental CSOs and related government agencies through dialogues and joint activities and oblige governments to involve CSOs in medium and full sized projects with certain percentage.
- Strengthen institutional capacity for CSOs through capacity building and institutional grants and providing training to CSOs to enhance managerial and technical capacity and develop proposals

- GEF should provide support for regular Regional meetings and other knowledge sharing and technical exchange opportunities among NGOs in the region
- Increase the GEF SGP budget in the region and strengthen SGP outreach and capacity building activities for CSOs; strengthen existing GEF SGP networks link them to the GEF NGO Network;. SGP should consider support for joint projects between NGOs in adjacent countries to facilitate sharing and joint capacity building
- Provide additional resources to strengthen regional cooperation and sharing through the GEF NGO Network and establish coordination mechanisms at country level in those countries with a significant number of CSOs or large scale GEF activities – such as country forums of focal points. The work of the GEF NGO network should be promoted in the region and more organisations encouraged to join
- Annual meetings should be held in each country between CSOs and the GEF Operational focal points (as agreed by GEF Council Nov 2010).
- Action should be taken by members of the GEF NGO Network together with the government focal points to help inform civil society stakeholders on opportunities for involvement in the development of full-sized projects.
- GEF Public Involvement policy needs to be fully implemented in this region especially in the development of government led projects. In particular –
 - Early engagement of CSOs in national consultation and portfolio development processes.
 - Development of clear guidelines for Civil society engagement – both generic and country specific
 - Effective participation of civil society in project development and formulation.
 - Special policy/mechanisms for engagement of indigenous and local communities
 - Enhanced consideration of gender and social issues
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- Specific guidelines or tools/learning materials (eg documentation of lessons learned and good practices for civil society engagement) should be developed to stimulate enhanced CSO engagement in GEF project and programme development in the region.
- Develop a regional GEF project to facilitate practical action to address common environment problems and scale up good practices.
- The level of CSO engagement in GEF project and programme development in the region should be documented and monitored by GEF NGO Network in conjunction with GEF Focal Points, Agencies and Secretariat; and a report on progress and constraints to enhancing CSO engagement in GEF projects and programmes in the region should be prepared and submitted to future Regional CSO meetings or annual ECW meetings.

CSO CONSULTATION MEETING IN JORDAN, 13 & 14 Feb 2012 - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

NO	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	DESIGNATION	ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
1	Mohammad Rafee	Hameedi	Program Director	Afghan Land Consulting Organization	AFGHANISTAN
2	Asadullah	Azad	Senior Programme Officer	Afghan Land Consulting Organization (ALCO)	AFGHANISTAN
3	Siham	Medani		World Deserts Foundation	ALGERIA
4	Salah	Sahabi Abed	President	Association de Recherche sur le Climat et (ARCE)	ALGERIA
5	Essam	Nada	Executive Director - North Africa Regional Focal Point	Arab Network for Environment and Development - GEF NGO Network	EGYPT
6	Ezzat	Hassaan	Climate Change Expert	AOYE(Arab office for Youth and Environment)	EGYPT
7	Nabeel Ismail	Abu-Shriha	General Manager	Women Access to Entrepreneurship Development and Training (WAEDAT)	JORDAN
8	Abeer Mohammed	Al-Dagestani	Policy Analyst	Mesopotamia for Environmental Protection	IRAQ
9	Yehya	Shehadeh	Director General	The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature	JORDAN
10	Ziyad Jaber Faleh	AlAlawneh	Director	Land and Human to Advocate Progress	JORDAN
11	Mohammad Hamdan	Al Masalha	President	Jordan Environment Society	JORDAN
12	Ahmad	Al-Kofahi	Executive Director	Jordan Environment Society	JORDAN
13	Batool	Ab u H a z e e m	Civil Engineer	Jordan Environment Society	JORDAN
14	Bara'	Atteily		Jordan Environment Society	JORDAN
15	Nawal Abu	Rmeileh		Horizon Foundation	JORDAN
16	Sasan	Rabieh	Coordinator of ECO-	ECO-IEST	IRAN

NO	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	DESIGNATION	ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
			IEST		
17	Saadiyah	Alsalihi	President	Together to Protect Human & Environment Association (TOGETHER)	IRAQ
18	Muqdad Abdulwahhab M. Ameen	Al-Khateed	Head of Department of Sustainable Development	University of Technology Baghdad	IRAQ
19	Najla	Fahd	Treasurer	Green Line Association	Lebanon
20	Mirna	Karouny	Member	Human Environmental Association for Development	Lebanon
21	Chaouki	Mohamed	Secretary General	Association des Enseignants des Sciences de la vie et de la terre au maroc:AESVT Maroc	MOROCCO
22	Tanveer	Arif	CEO, Focal Point of GEF NGOs Network, South Asia	Society for Conservation and Protection of Environment (SCOPE)	PAKISTAN
23	Mohammad Khan	Samoon	President	Badin Development & Research Org (BDRO)	PAKISTAN
24	Mohammad Arshad	Gill	Manager Projects	LEAD Pakistan	PAKISTAN
25	Imad	Alatrash	Executive Director	Palestine Wildlife Society	PALESTINE
26	Ghassan	Shahin	Chairman	Syrian Environment Protection Society (SEPS)	SYRIA
27	Mohamad Samir	Safadi	Chairman of the Board	Syrian Environment Association	SYRIA
28	Rosa Jarary	Kheder	FIRDOS coordinator in Rural Damascus and AL-Qunitra	The Syria Trust for Development	SYRIA
29	Sana Taktak	Keskes		Association de la Continuite des Generations (ACG) Continuity Generations	TUNISIA

NO	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	DESIGNATION	ORGANISATION	COUNTRY
				Association	
30	Hafedh	Hentati	Head of Communication	Lions Club Sfax Thyna	TUNISIA
31	Ayse Yesim	Erkan	Director, Projects and International Relations	TEMA, Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats	TURKEY
32	Samed	Albori	Working Team Member	Environment and People Newspaper	YEMEN
33	Mufeed	Al-Halemi	Member	Arab Organization for Youth and Environment	YEMEN
34	Faizal	Parish	Central Focal Point	GEF NGO Network	MALAYSIA
35	Mohamad	Raouf		Gulf Research Centre	ARAB SAUDI

ANNEX 2- AGENDA

Day 1- 13th February		
14.00-14.30	Registration	JES
14.30-15.00	Opening	GEF NGO Network (GNN), Jordan Environment Society (JES), Government of Jordan (GEF Operational Focal Point)
15.00-15.20	Introduction to meeting and agenda	Faizal Parish , Central Focal Point, GEF NGO Network
15.20-15.50	Self introduction of participants	Participants
15.50-16.20	Introduction to GEF and GEF NGO Network <i>Presentation, Q&A</i>	Faizal Parish , Central Focal Point, GEF NGO Network
16.20-16.40	GEF and GEF NGO Network in North Africa <i>Presentation, Q&A</i>	Essam Nada , Regional Focal Point (RFP) North Africa, GEF NGO Network
16.40-17.00	GEF and GEF NGO Network in West Asia <i>Presentation, Q&A</i>	Tanveer Arif , Regional Focal Point (RFP) South Asia, GEF NGO Network
17.00-17.20	Opportunities for CSO involvement in GEF Activities <i>Presentation, Q&A</i>	Faizal Parish , Central Focal Point, GEF NGO Network
17.20-17.40	GEF SGP <i>Presentation, Q&A</i>	Munir Al-Adgham GEF SGP Coordinator, Jordan
17.40-18.30	Experience in working with GEF and GEF funded projects in the region	Yehya Shehadeh , The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature, Jordan Chaoki Mohamed Association des Enseignants des Sciences de la vie et de la terre au maroc (AESVT Maroc), Morocco
18.30	Closing of Day 1	
19.30	Dinner at Amman Hotel	
Day 2 -14th February		
08.30-09.30	GEF policies in relation to Civil society • Public Involvement Policy	Faizal Parish , GEF NGO

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental and social safeguards • Indigenous peoples 	Network
09.30-10.15	Presentations on current level and effectiveness of Environmental CSO activities and national and regional networking in region	Abeer Mohammed, Mesopotamia For Environmental Protection, Iraq
10.15 -10.30	Coffee break	
10.30-12.30	Breakout groups – how to enhance effectiveness of CSOs in region and improve engagement in GEF activities and of operations Group A - North Africa Group B - West Asia	Group A- Essam Nada Group B- Tanveer Arif
12.30-13.30	Lunch	
13.30-14.00	<i>Report back from Breakout groups Discussion</i>	
14.00-14.30	Strengthening GEF NGO Network In region <i>Discussion</i>	
14.30-15.00	Discussion on potential recommendations or issues to raise at GEF ECW meeting	
15.00-15.20	Coffee break	
15.20-16.00	Any other issues	
16.00-17.00 <i>(time to be confirmed)</i>	Dialogue with Ms. Monique Barbut, GEF CEO	Ms. Monique Barbut
17.00-17.15	Closing	GEF Secretariat GEF NGO Network
18.00	Dinner	
19.00	Departure of those attending ECW meeting (transfer to meeting hotel)	
14 th evening or 15 th	Departure	