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GEF-NGO Network Statement during 44th GEF Council Meeting
Agenda 14 of the GEF Work Programme
19 June 2013

We welcome this Work programme of the GEF which moves us to allocation of 67% of GEF 5 resources.

We have circulated the work programme to our 500 members organisations from almost all recipient countries for comment. Based on the feedback we have prepared specific comments on 16 projects which we will provide separately to the Secretariat. While the feedback given has generally confirmed the importance of the projects – it has raised both technical concerns on certain projects as well as on the level of CSO engagement.

In general there has been some improvement in the level and detail of information specifying planned engagement of CSOs in the further development and implementation of the projects concerned. While some projects give clear reference to Civil society - there still are projects which have inadequate consideration of CSO engagement.

I would like to highlight two projects in the Russian Federation which show good consideration of CSO engagement – The project for sustainable land management and ecosystem based climate change mitigation in the Altai Sayan Ecoregion – specifies a broad range of specific roles for CSO's in the project. The National Urban transport Improvement project will include a project announcement workshop in September this year as part of the further design process and poverty and social impact assessments in target cities to engage civil society stakeholders.

In India we are happy that the Project on integrated management of wetland Biodiversity and ecosystem services for water and food security promotes and recognises multi-stakeholder engagement including CSOs. It also recognises the principle of FPIC in relation to the participation of indigenous communities.

In contrast another project in India on Improving Rural Energy Access in Deficit states which appears to lack participatory involvement of all stakeholders particularly CSOs. We feel that communities should not just be end users but also be provided necessary skills to manage the microgrids after the completion of the project.

In Indonesia the project on strengthening forest and ecosystem connectivity in the Rimba landscape does not have any specific component in strengthening and empowering indigenous communities in these forest areas

Finally two regional projects related to fishery refugia in the south China sea and highly migratory fish stock in the west pacific and East Asian seas do not clearly show how the local/indigenous fishers will be engaged and their traditional knowledge incorporated into the projects.

We believe that there is still need for GEF agencies to strengthen their efforts ensure that the projects identify appropriate national, as well as local NGOs/CBOs to be engaged in different stages of the project, including project planning, implementation and monitoring. Similarly GEFSEC need to continue vigilance in checking on such issues in the review process. We also hope that GEFSEC will verify that the final project designs include Project Stakeholder Engagement Plans (SEP) in line with the council decision in November 2010.