

# **Indigenous Peoples' Participation in the Decisions and Policy-making of the GEF**

**June 2007**



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## Purpose of the Briefing

This briefing is an introduction to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), its organization structure and processes of decision making. It is also a guide to the ways in which indigenous peoples can be involved in, or influence, the GEF.<sup>1</sup> The GEF is a major source of funds for environmental projects and has influence in shaping government and UN agency policies on the environment. Both the funds managed by the GEF, and its impact on government and international environmental policy, impact heavily on the lives and livelihoods of indigenous peoples.

In common with previous reviews, FPP considers that the channels available for indigenous participation in the policy dialogue of the GEF and in access to funding through project proposals are currently insufficient.<sup>2</sup> The processes in place at the moment face both structural and process difficulties that hinder effective participation by indigenous peoples.

### What is the Global Environment Facility?

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is a multilateral agency mandated to provide additional funds for projects with potential global importance in addressing key environmental challenges. It was established in 1991 as a pilot project under the World Bank and in 1994 was restructured and mandated to act as the 'financial mechanism', or funding source, for the implementation of international environmental conventions and agreements established at the 'Rio Summit'.

The key conventions and agreements that it is mandated to support are:

- The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)
- A range of other national and regional agreements related to international waters.<sup>3</sup>

As the financial mechanism for Conventions, the decisions of the Conferences of the Parties to the Conventions are considered strong guidance (although not binding) for the GEF Council. This is particularly relevant to indigenous peoples as decisions by the COP of the Convention on Biological Diversity have referenced indigenous and local communities in the past,<sup>4</sup> and the influence that indigenous peoples have at the CBD can translate to influence on the decisions of the CBD for the GEF.

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<sup>1</sup> This briefing is based on communication with indigenous peoples regarding their experiences with talking to GEF, reviews of the documents provided to the GEF by indigenous peoples and support organizations over the past years, and on the official documents of the GEF. The main points in this paper have been reviewed by current indigenous participants in the GEF NGO Consultations and leaders active in GEF meetings and other relevant processes such as the CBD, and by some beneficiaries of GEF grants including the International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests (IAITPTF).

<sup>2</sup> International Alliance of Indigenous-Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests and European Alliance with Indigenous Peoples, 1997, *Indigenous Peoples Participation in Global Environmental Negotiations: an evaluation of Indigenous Peoples' participation in and impact on the UN Conference on Environment and Development and its follow-up mechanisms*, London. Available from the International Alliance Secretariat: contact info@international-alliance.org

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.gefweb.org/Projects/Focal\\_Areas/focal\\_areas.html](http://www.gefweb.org/Projects/Focal_Areas/focal_areas.html)

<sup>4</sup> See for instance Recommendation VIII/24 para 22. <http://www.cbd.int/decisions/default.shtml?m=COP-08&id=11038&lg=0>

### **Box 1 Recommendations to the GEF from other international fora**

As the financial mechanism for a range of international conventions and agreements, the GEF must take into serious consideration the recommendations made by the fora associated with these agreements and conventions. The Convention on Biological Diversity is one such forum which has been effectively used by indigenous peoples to have their concerns addressed by their governments and by the international community. Such fora can be used indirectly to put pressure on the GEF, as the recommendation below from the 8<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the CBD shows:

*22. Invites the Global Environment Facility:*

...

*(d) To review and revise, as appropriate, its protected areas' policies in relation to indigenous and local communities; and*

*(e) To support community conserved areas, ensuring the immediate, full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in the development of relevant activities;<sup>5</sup>*

Recommendation VIII/24, paragraph 22

### **How does the GEF work?**

Initially and importantly, the GEF cannot carry out any projects or activities by itself. It is a multilateral fund (or 'facility') which must rely on other member organizations of the UN to implement any projects. The GEF currently has three UN agencies which act as implementing agencies (although this is under review and may expand). As it stands, three agencies which manage GEF projects are:

- the United Nations Environment Programme<sup>6</sup>
- the United Nations Development Programme<sup>7</sup>
- the World Bank<sup>8</sup>

In addition to this group of three, there are seven other international organizations that may contribute to the management and execution of GEF projects. These additional seven organizations are: African Development Bank (AfDB), Asian Development Bank<sup>9</sup> (ADB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), International Fund for Agricultural Development<sup>10</sup> (IFAD), and United Nations Industrial Development Organization<sup>11</sup> (UNIDO). If a party (including governments, NGOs or indigenous peoples) want to access funding from the GEF, this must be done in partnership with one of these agencies.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> <http://dgef.unep.org/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.undp.org/gef/05/>

<sup>8</sup> [www.worldbank.org/gef](http://www.worldbank.org/gef)

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.adb.org/Environment/partnerships.asp>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.ifad.org/operations/gef/index.htm>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.unido.org/doc/4731>

The GEF can not fund the total amount of any project. It is mandated to be a co-financer, or to share funding, for projects that may have a global significance. The GEF uses the term 'incremental costs' to refer to the section of a project budget that it will fund. By 'incremental costs' the GEF means the additional costs of activities needed to enhance a project of local or national benefit so that it delivers global benefits. An example would be fitting a coal mine with technologies to reduce methane emissions. The coal is produced for national benefits but the reduction of methane emissions is of global benefit.

The fact that the GEF does not implement projects directly means that the 'implementing agencies' or 'executing agencies' may be the best initial point of contact for indigenous peoples if they have concerns with particular projects. Some of these agencies also have policies on indigenous peoples (i.e. World Bank, UNDP and IDB) and any project implemented by them must comply with the standards of their policies.<sup>12</sup>

The GEF funds projects in three categories - Large Projects (over 1 million USD of GEF funding), Medium Sized Projects (up to 1 million USD of GEF funding) and Small Grants (UNDP administered grants of up to 50,000 USD). The Small Grants Programme, often cited as the key mechanism for indigenous peoples to access GEF funding, accounts for only a tiny proportion of the GEF funding portfolio.<sup>13</sup> The Medium Sized Project channel of funding has successfully been used by both indigenous peoples and NGOs. The Large Project portfolio is dominated by lending to governments.

### Structure of the GEF

The two key decision making bodies in the GEF are the Assembly and the Council. In practice, significant power is also wielded by the Secretariat as the body tasked with carrying out the plans formulated by the Council and in proposing any changes or developments in the work areas and strategies of the GEF. The Council also takes the advice of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) and the Monitoring and Evaluation Office of the GEF. In response to demands from civil society for involvement in the decision making processes of the GEF, the GEF has established an independent network shown in the diagram overleaf - the 'NGO Network'.

#### ***The Assembly***

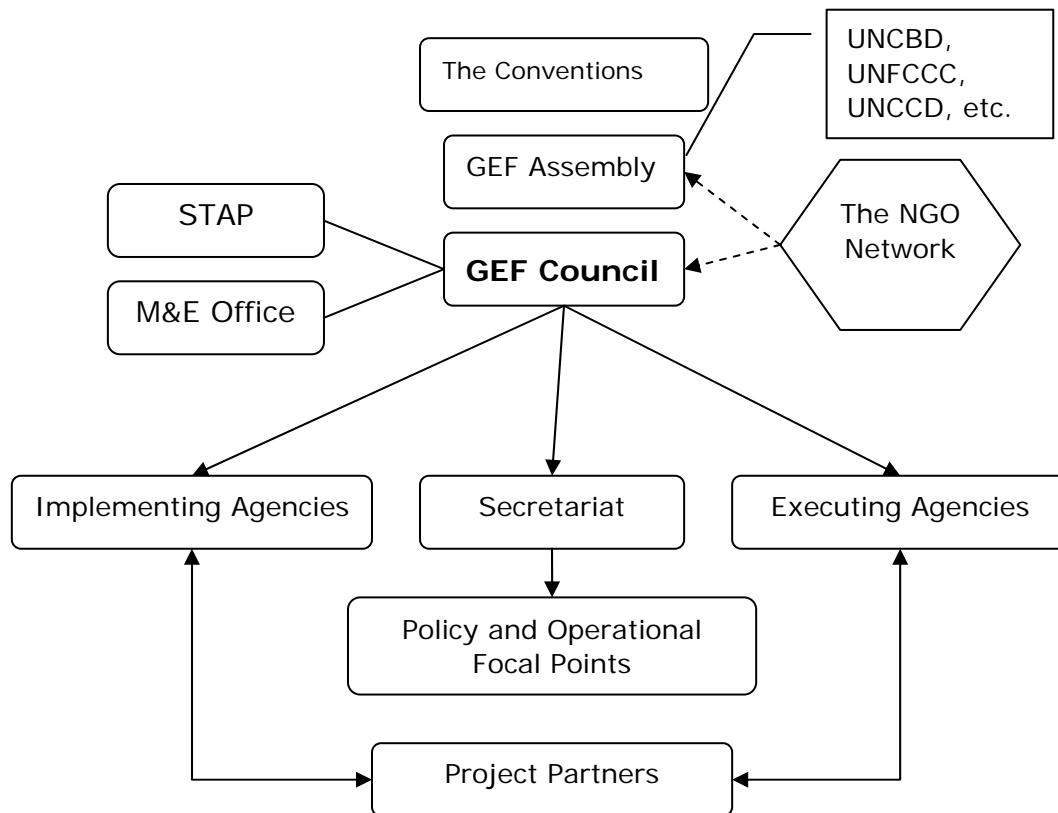
The GEF Assembly is the highest decision making body of the GEF, although in practice the GEF Council makes many important decisions about how the GEF is going to work, and what it will work on. The Assembly is formed by members of all 177 countries that are members of the GEF.<sup>14</sup> Every four years the relevant Minister for each of the governments (usually the Minister of the Environment) meet together to review the work of the GEF. The Assembly reviews all reports prepared by the Council, and must agree to any proposed changes to the guiding documents, or the 'instrument', of the GEF.

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<sup>12</sup> Links to the relevant policies are provided in Annex 3, the agencies which have adopted indigenous peoples' policies or safeguards are: the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Finance Corporation and the United Nations Development Programme.

<sup>13</sup> Forest Peoples Programme, *Indigenous Peoples and the Global Environment Facility: Indigenous Peoples Experiences of GEF-funded Biodiversity Conservation* Moreton-in-Marsh, January 2005 p. 74. Available at: [http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/ifi\\_igo/gef/gef\\_study\\_jan05\\_eng.pdf](http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/ifi_igo/gef/gef_study_jan05_eng.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> For a full list of member countries, see: <http://www.thegef.org/interior.aspx?id=210>



### ***The Council***

The GEF Council functions as an independent board of directors, with responsibility for developing, adopting, and evaluating GEF programs. Council members representing 32 constituencies (16 from developing countries, 14 from developed countries, and two from countries with transitional economies) meet twice each year for three days. All decisions reached by the Council are by consensus. Current members of the Council and their alternates can be found on the GEF website.<sup>15</sup>

Prior to all Council meetings there is a one day consultation with non-government organizations. These GEF Council – NGO consultations are intended to “encourage and strengthen NGO involvement in the governance of the GEF, notably during the GEF Council meetings where GEF policies are decided”.<sup>16</sup>

### ***The NGO Network***

This network is an important body for indigenous peoples in approaching the GEF, as it is the formal channel through which all ‘civil society’ participation in the GEF is coordinated. It is an autonomous network, not controlled although partly funded, by the GEF. The network is coordinated through a system of regional focal points elected from NGO members in the given region. In addition to the regional focal points, an additional focal point for indigenous peoples’ was established in 2003.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> A list of current members is available on the GEF website, where the countries that they represent are also shown: [http://www.thegef.org/interior\\_right.aspx?id=36](http://www.thegef.org/interior_right.aspx?id=36)

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.gefweb.org/participants/Focal\\_Points/NGO/ngo.html](http://www.gefweb.org/participants/Focal_Points/NGO/ngo.html)

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.thegef.org/interior.aspx?id=17362>

The key functions of the network are to play a lead role in organizing NGO consultations at the GEF Council and coordinating participation in the NGO Forums at GEF Assemblies, and to share information about Council and Assembly decisions and outcomes with all network members. Membership in the network is automatic for all organizations accredited to the GEF, and the procedure to gain accreditation is detailed in Annex 1. The full list of current regional focal points and indigenous peoples' focal point are available in Annex 2.

## How have indigenous peoples been involved in the GEF to date?

Indigenous peoples can participate in the GEF by:

- (i) being involved in the policy processes of the GEF by providing inputs to the Assembly and Council;
- (ii) accessing funding from the GEF to implement projects;
- (iii) raising concerns or becoming involved in projects through contact with the relevant implementing agency; and
- (iv) indirectly influencing the GEF by raising concerns in other relevant fora such as the Conferences of the Parties to the Conventions for which the GEF is the acting financial mechanism.

This briefing confines its analysis to indigenous peoples' involvement in the policy processes of the GEF, through the Assembly and the Council, and a brief overview of GEF funding of projects affecting indigenous peoples. A far more detailed treatment of projects impacting on indigenous peoples is provided in a separate review undertaken by the Forest Peoples Programme.<sup>18</sup>

### *Indigenous peoples at the GEF Assembly*

As indigenous peoples' involvement in the GEF Assembly is conducted through the NGO Network, the access given to the Network directly impacts on the access available to indigenous peoples. The NGO Network as a collective has been involved in GEF Assemblies since the first Assembly in India in 1998 when the Assembly members requested a joint NGO paper for consideration, and an NGO Consultation was organized in conjunction with the Assembly.<sup>19</sup>

At the second GEF Assembly meeting in PR China in 2002, the GEF again organized a separate consultation with NGOs, of which a record can be found on the GEF website.<sup>20</sup> The format for input at these Assemblies was for a selected member of the NGO Network to present a statement on behalf of the NGO Network as a whole. There was criticism of this approach as not reflecting the diversity of views nor fully using the expertise of indigenous peoples and other groups in the NGO Network.

Partly in response to such criticisms, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> GEF Assembly in Cape Town, South Africa 2006, the GEF held for the first time an 'NGO Forum' alongside the Assembly. This Forum was organized as a more formal space for discussion between and among NGOs and the governments and myriad agencies who attend GEF Assemblies. At this Forum there were a number of interventions regarding the rights of indigenous peoples made by indigenous delegates.<sup>21</sup> Feedback from participants in the NGO Forum indicates perceptions of higher levels of indigenous involvement in NGO Network

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<sup>18</sup> Liam Taylor and Tom Griffiths, *A desk-based review of the treatment of indigenous peoples' and social issues in large and medium-sized GEF biodiversity projects 2005-2006*, Forest Peoples Programme, Feb 2007

<sup>19</sup> Available at:  
[http://www.gefweb.org/participants/Assembly/1st\\_Assembly/1st\\_assembly\\_documents/documents/NGO%20Information%20Note.pdf](http://www.gefweb.org/participants/Assembly/1st_Assembly/1st_assembly_documents/documents/NGO%20Information%20Note.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> The record of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Assembly of the GEF can be found at:  
[http://www.gefweb.org/participants/Assembly/2nd\\_Assembly/2nd\\_assembly.html](http://www.gefweb.org/participants/Assembly/2nd_Assembly/2nd_assembly.html)  
However there is no record officially provided by the GEF of any NGO participation or inputs into the Assembly.  
Such an official record of NGO and indigenous involvement does exist for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Assemblies.

<sup>21</sup> A report of the NGO Forum is available at: [http://www.gefweb.org/Partners/partners-Nongovernmental\\_Organ/documents/NGO\\_forum\\_report\\_Oct.26.06.pdf](http://www.gefweb.org/Partners/partners-Nongovernmental_Organ/documents/NGO_forum_report_Oct.26.06.pdf)

through this Forum<sup>22</sup>. The organization of such fora appears beneficial in terms of allowing indigenous peoples' distinct voices in the work of the NGO Network and the GEF Assembly.

Despite these improvements however, there are problems with the process and structure of the NGO Forum which hinder meaningful participation by indigenous peoples in the Assembly.

The NGO Forum is held separately from the Assembly and the opportunities to intervene to high-level roundtables – where the substantive discussions of the GEF Assembly take place – by indigenous peoples or regarding the rights of indigenous peoples are non-existent. The speaking slots for the NGO Network inside the Assembly itself are strictly limited and must be shared between a great diversity of voices. The NGO Forum is also held concurrently with other events surrounding the GEF Assembly, and competing interests has meant in the past that few Assembly members attended the Forum in full, and many not even in part.

Further, the seats provided for the NGO Network to listen to the discussions of the Assembly are strictly limited, and as result NGO delegates and indigenous peoples' delegates rotated the available seats between them, resulting in a lack of continuity in following the discussions of the Assembly itself.

Finally, the inputs and recommendations provided to the Assembly by indigenous peoples and their representatives are not formally responded to by the Assembly. Statements such as the one below (Box 2) are provided to the GEF at significant expense of time and resources, yet the impact that they have on the discussions of the Assembly is unclear.

#### **Box 2      Statements made at the Forum**

There is no formal channel through which the Assembly members respond to the interventions or inputs of indigenous peoples. The statement below, made by Lucy Mulenkei, Indigenous Peoples' Focal Point, at the NGO Forum for the 3<sup>rd</sup> GEF Assembly, repeats calls from previous statements to both the Council and the Assembly. Neither the Assembly nor the Council have responded directly to the recommendations of indigenous peoples.

*We urge the GEF and all partners to take the lead in making a difference in your work by involving indigenous peoples in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the environmental project and activities.*

*Recommendation 8/24 COP 8 called on GEF to review its projected areas policy to assist communities to ensure full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and this recommendation should be taken up and implemented.*

*Before undertaking any project or associated activities affecting indigenous peoples, free, prior and informed consent is essential. Yet many times Indigenous Peoples and local communities are not involved at all stages, leading to the question asked of the GEF and other agencies by indigenous peoples - whose land do you consider indigenous lands to be? Whose needs and rights are being protected?*<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Personal communication , Lucy Mulenkei, GEF Indigenous Peoples Focal Point, April 2007

<sup>23</sup> GEF-NGO Network, *Turning Policy into Reality from the Ground up*, Report of the NGO Forum Cape Town, August 2006. Available at: [http://www.thegef.org/interior\\_right.aspx?id=52&menu\\_id=114](http://www.thegef.org/interior_right.aspx?id=52&menu_id=114)

### ***Indigenous peoples' inputs to the GEF Council***

As with the Assembly, indigenous peoples' involvement in the Council is through the formal avenue of the NGO Network. Prior to each of the bi-annual meetings of the GEF Council a day of consultations with NGOs is held, coordinated by the NGO Network and with some limited funding for participation provided by the GEF. Any organization accredited with the GEF can attend these consultations. Typically, the one day consultation is preceded by a day-long 'strategy session' in which members of the NGO Network discuss among themselves prior to meeting with the Council.

At the 5th Conference of the Parties to the CBD in 2000, indigenous representatives requested a meeting with the then CEO of the GEF, Mohamed El-Ashry, and as a result of this meeting he agreed to facilitate indigenous involvement in the GEF. Since this time, of the ten seats available to NGO's to listen to Council proceedings, two are reserved for indigenous peoples' representatives, and a limited amount of specific funding is allocated to supporting indigenous peoples' participation in the Council.

However, despite these positive steps, indigenous participation in the GEF Council remains limited and few indigenous organizations are aware of the consultations or of the ways in which they can attend or provide input.

One barrier to participation which has been identified by participants is that the GEF Council – NGO consultations are conducted entirely in English. Translation is provided in the Council discussions for the official UN languages, but for the pre-Council consultations all presentations must be made in English, or delegates must arrange for their own translation services. This marginalizes the significant number of Spanish speaking indigenous peoples from Latin America, and those from the Francophone world, as well as many indigenous peoples from Asia.

Follow-up and recording of statements provided to the GEF is also a concern. Reports of the Council do not include detailed minutes, but rather consist of a short joint summary by the co-Chairs. Only once has a formal statement by indigenous peoples' representatives been officially recorded by the GEF Council (November 2005). The statement was made by Cesar Montez from the Navajo people of Seesto, speaking on behalf of Land is Life and the International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests.<sup>24</sup> Lack of detailed records means that Council members are not provided with detailed statements by non-GEF sources unless they specifically seek them out themselves.

As with the Assembly, the Council appears to take little notice of the interventions provided in the consultations and NGO statements to the Council Meeting. The recommendations listed below provide clear guidance to the GEF on possible ways to address participation issues facing indigenous peoples, and principles of free, prior and informed consent and traditional knowledge. However no response was gained from the Council then, nor has there been direct response since. Whether these recommendations are taken up in an informal manner by individual Council members is unclear, but few concrete results have been seen from this and other statements made by indigenous peoples to date.

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<sup>24</sup> GEF/NGO Report, *Draft Compilation of NGO Interventions*, November 2005  
[http://www.thegef.org/Partners/partners-Nongovernmental\\_Organ/partners-nongovernmental\\_organ.html](http://www.thegef.org/Partners/partners-Nongovernmental_Organ/partners-nongovernmental_organ.html)

### **Box 3      Statements to the Council by indigenous peoples**

Since the establishment of the GEF Council – NGO Consultations, indigenous peoples have made a number of statements to the Council regarding their rights and perspectives on the work of the GEF. As with the Assembly, there is no process of formal response by the Council to such recommendations and statements.

*"Specifically, we urge the Council to:*

- 1. Approve funding to allow six regional indigenous peoples' representatives to attend the next Council Meeting.*
- 2. Provide funding for broad-based indigenous participation at the 3rd GEF Assembly.*
- 3. Establish an Indigenous Peoples Task Force to strongly and effectively engage the following unresolved issues:*
  - a) Development of a policy regarding indigenous peoples that secures their rights to traditional lands and livelihoods and their right to free, prior and informed consent.*
  - b) Revision of the GEF's Monitoring and Evaluation Procedures to ensure the participation of indigenous communities and the use of traditional knowledge in GEF supported projects.*
  - c) Elaboration of clear definitions of activities related to the strategic priority of 'implementation of innovative and indigenous sustainable land management practices'."*

Statement by Cesar Montez, Land is Life and the International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests, November 2005

### ***Participation in the NGO Network***

As all indigenous participation in policy processes of the GEF is conducted through the NGO Network, the effectiveness of the network is central to effective advocacy for all members.

As noted in the independent *Review of the Non-Governmental Organization Network of the GEF* commissioned by the GEF in 2005, the NGO Network faces difficulties in carrying out its extensive mandate of coordinating all civil society input into the GEF.<sup>25</sup> The breadth of this mandate means that the NGO Network must work to balance between competing and diverse interests within the long list of accredited NGOs and work to ensure that all members are kept informed of developments at the global level.

Indigenous peoples have also raised the issue of whether the NGO Network is the appropriate channel for their participation in the GEF.<sup>26</sup> The issues and perspectives of indigenous peoples are distinct from those of 'non-government organizations'. Indigenous peoples have distinct rights under international law and are recognized by the CBD and other agencies of the UN system as a 'Major Group' whose perspectives should be brought into dialogues affecting them.

At the same time, however, much strength has been gained through close networking with non-governmental organizations and effective working alliances have been built in the past between indigenous peoples and NGOs. For some, the most significant concern is not the format of the NGO Network itself, but the limited space provided to the NGO Network, in the GEF Council – NGO Consultations, in the Council itself and in the Assemblies, which is insufficient to accurately reflect

<sup>25</sup> *Review of the Non-Governmental Organization Network of the GEF*, GEF/C.27/Inf.5, October 24, 2005  
[http://thegef.org/Documents/Council\\_Documents/GEF\\_C27/documents/C.27.Inf.5ReviewoftheNGONetworkoftheGEF.pdf](http://thegef.org/Documents/Council_Documents/GEF_C27/documents/C.27.Inf.5ReviewoftheNGONetworkoftheGEF.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

the diversity of voices within the NGO sector, let alone those from other interested groups such as indigenous peoples.

#### ***Involvement in GEF projects***

Several independent studies of GEF projects, and the evaluation reports of the GEF itself, have found that participation of indigenous and local communities in medium and large sized projects has often been defective.<sup>27</sup> These reports found, in general, that GEF projects gave inadequate attention to poverty risks and the potential for negative social impacts. Specific to indigenous and local communities, the following findings emerged:

- Inadequate attention is given to poverty risks and the potential for negative social impacts
- Affected communities are not involved in project design and preparation
- The design is flawed due to defective participation and little understanding of local livelihoods
- Traditional knowledge is often ignored or disregarded
- Land tenure is often not addressed
- Costs are imposed on indigenous peoples and local communities without adequate compensation
- Alternative livelihood and income generation activities often fail
- Communities are sometimes impoverished and left worse off as a result of the project<sup>28</sup>

Such findings underscore the need for the involvement of indigenous peoples in the policy processes of the GEF, if the funding strategies and projects of the GEF are to become more responsive to social and cultural impacts of projects funded by the GEF.

Positively, strong lobby work by indigenous organizations with the GEF secretariat has resulted in the direct funding of a medium sized project managed by indigenous organizations – the *Indigenous Peoples' Network for Change* project run by the International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests. This project aims to increase indigenous participation in all international environmental policy fora relevant to indigenous peoples, including the policy processes of the GEF itself.<sup>29</sup>

Further, the Small Grants Programme of the GEF, although representing a tiny proportion of the overall GEF budget, has proven to be accessible to indigenous peoples' organizations in some countries.<sup>30</sup> As this programme is coordinated through National Steering Committees in each country in which it operates, the extent to which indigenous peoples can access funding through this programme depends largely on the members of the National Steering Committee and whether they consider indigenous issues and concerns to be important.

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<sup>27</sup> See, for instance, GEF (2006) *The Role of Local Benefits in Global Environmental Programs Evaluation Report No. 30*, GEF Evaluation Office, Washington, DC and Liam Taylor and Tom Griffiths, *A desk-based review of the treatment of indigenous peoples' and social issues in large and medium-sized GEF biodiversity projects 2005-2006*, Forest Peoples Programme, Feb 2007

<sup>28</sup> GEF (2006) *The Role of Local Benefits in Global Environmental Programs Evaluation Report No. 30*, GEF Evaluation Office, Washington, DC

<sup>29</sup> Further information about this project can be accessed at the website of the IAITPTF. See: [http://www.international-alliance.org/network\\_for\\_change.htm](http://www.international-alliance.org/network_for_change.htm)

<sup>30</sup> For further information about the Small Grants Programme, their website is: <http://sgp.undp.org/>

## Significant concerns and recommendations

Many of the specific concerns that have been raised in the past regarding indigenous peoples' involvement in the GEF have been brought out above. Central to all these concerns is the challenge of making the GEF responsive to the perspectives, statements and views of indigenous peoples, as expressed by indigenous peoples in GEF Assemblies, Council meetings, consultations and other fora. Experience has shown that the response of the GEF to such inputs is usually either indirect or non-existent.

The challenge of how to effectively interact with the GEF is a significant one. This challenge is made more immediate by the fact that the GEF appears set to undergo significant reform in its processes of work. A speech by the new CEO of the GEF, Monique Barbut, to the GEF Council meeting in December 2006 highlighted the need for the GEF to reform itself. The reform agenda introduced in that speech emphasizes the role of countries, stating that equity between members and innovation in approach would be deciding factors for future project funded. The speech introduced a 'sustainability compact' between member countries that would provide for an ombudsman office in the GEF, yet makes no mention of indigenous peoples, local communities or indeed of any rights holders.<sup>31</sup>

Part of the challenge of making the GEF more responsive rests with indigenous peoples' organizations and support organizations, the challenge of maintaining pressure on the GEF by reiterating statements and recommendations and following through with the GEF to expose issues and cases in which the views of indigenous peoples are ignored. Part of the challenge also lies with the GEF, with the Assembly, the Council and the Secretariat. The GEF must ensure that it is responsive to and respectful of the stated views of indigenous peoples with regards to their rights and their involvement in environmental projects and programmes.

### Recommendations for the GEF

- To implement Recommendation VIII/24 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to, *inter alia*, review protected areas policies in relation to indigenous peoples and to extend support, immediately and with the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples, community conserved areas
- To commit to respecting and promoting the rights of indigenous peoples in all work of relevance to indigenous peoples, their lands and resources, with particular emphasis on the right to free, prior and informed consent for any activities impacting on indigenous peoples' lands, livelihoods and resources
- To consider and respond to previous recommendations and statements provided by indigenous peoples to the Council and Assembly, and to institute a formal process of responding to the recommendations and statements presented to the Council and the Assembly by NGOs and indigenous peoples' organizations in the future
- With particular attention to the GEF Council – NGO Consultations, review the process of involvement for indigenous peoples and non-government organizations and adjust as necessary, in particular:

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<sup>31</sup> Barbut, M, *The New GEF: a proving ground for our sustainable future* Speech to the GEF Council Meeting, Washington DC, December 2006

- To provide a greater number of speaking slots to the NGO network and to indigenous peoples to allow space for a diversity of views to be presented at consultations at all levels, in particular in the Council Meetings
- To provide translation into key UN languages in the GEF Council – NGO Consultations
- To provide sufficient 'badges' or passes for attendance to the Council Meetings to the NGO network and indigenous peoples to allow continuity for attendees, instead of the current procedure of 'rotating' the passes

### Possible strategies for indigenous peoples organizations

If indigenous organizations decide to sustain and strengthen existing engagement with the GEF, the following strategies are provided as possible ways in which such engagement can be made more effective:

- Lobbying the GEF Assembly and the GEF Council can be undertaken directly at the relevant meetings, but it is also possible for indigenous peoples to contact and lobby their country's representative on the Assembly or Council. Such direct lobbying may assist in creating allies within the Council and Assembly who can highlight indigenous peoples' concerns in the formal meetings.
- Statements made to the GEF need to be followed up and repeated. Making statements on rights and participation is only useful if those recommendations are listened to and implemented. Creation of a database of previous statements made by indigenous representatives to the GEF would assist in maintaining continuity.
- Indigenous participation in the GEF needs to be increased. The higher the number of indigenous organizations registered to the GEF, the greater the influence that indigenous peoples will be able to exert within the NGO Network and towards the GEF Council and Assembly – increased registration of indigenous organizations will be important for this.
- A sustained effort is needed by indigenous activists to ensure that a significant number of leaders are engaged with the policy level processes of the GEF, as continuity of participation can ensure greater change.
- Problems with the *process* of indigenous participation in the GEF discussed above could be the subject of sustained advocacy by indigenous activists, to strengthen the work done by previous advocates.

## Annex 1 Process for Accreditation

Any indigenous representative who would like to attend the GEF – NGO Consultations, and receive updated information from the GEF on their work with NGOs can apply to be accredited with the GEF.

Individuals can not be accredited to the GEF, it must be on an organization level. Any organization wanting to gain accreditation needs to download and fill out an application form from the GEF website:  
<http://www.thegef.org/interior.aspx?id=17358>

This two-page application form should be returned to the Secretariat who will approve the accreditation.

Once accredited, all member organizations are automatically members of the GEF NGO Network.

Any indigenous organization accredited to the NGO Network can contact either their regional NGO Focal Point (listed in Annex 2), or the Indigenous Peoples Focal Point (also listed below) for information about attending the NGO Consultations.

## Annex 2 NGO Focal Points

### NGO Regional Focal Points

Last Updated March 2007

#### Central NGO Focal Point

Manuel, Dorothy  
Zero Regional Environment Organization  
158 Fife Avenue, Greenwood, P.O. Box 5338  
Harare  
Zimbabwe  
Tel: (+263 4) 720405/706998  
Fax:(+263 4) 720405/706998  
E-mail: dorothy@zeroregional.com

#### Eastern Africa

Awotar, Rajen  
Council for Development, Environmental,  
Studies and Conservation (MAUDESCO)  
P.O. Box 1124  
Port Louis  
Mauritius  
Tel: (230) 4672565  
E-mail: maudesco@intnet.mu

#### Western Africa

Nanasta, Djimingue / Ba, Libasse  
ENDA Tiers Monde - Programme  
Energie  
54, rue Carnot  
BP 3370  
Dakar  
Senegal  
Tel: (221) 822 5983  
Fax: (221) 821 7595  
E-mail: djim@enda.sn, libassba@enda.sn,  
enda.energy@sentoos.sn

#### Southern Africa

Manuel, Dorothy  
Zero Regional Environment Organization  
158 Fife Avenue, Greenwood, P.O. Box 5338  
Harare  
Zimbabwe  
Tel: (+263 4) 720405/706998  
Fax:(+263 4) 720405/706998  
E-mail: dorothy@zeroregional.com

### Northern Africa

Salah, Sahabi  
Association Recherche Climat  
Environnement (ARCE)  
BP 4250 Ibn Rochd, 31037  
Oran  
Algeria  
Tel: (213) 41 42 31 16  
Fax: (213) 41 53 07 38/41 42 58 67  
E-mail: salah\_sahabi@yahoo.com

### Asia Pacific

Horoi, Rex  
Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific  
International (Fiji)  
6 Des Voeux Road  
GPO BOX 18006  
Suva  
Fiji  
Tel: (679) 3312 250  
Fax: (679) 3312 298  
E-mail: rex.horoi@fsipi.org.fj

### Western Asia

Razavi, Khadija  
Centre for Eco-development Studies and  
Applications (CENESTA)  
West 10 Juybar Street, Fatemi Square  
14157 Tehran  
Iran  
Tel: (98-21) 8957922  
Fax:(98-21) 2954217  
E-mail: Khadija@cenesta.org

### South Asia

Mohiuddin, Ahmad  
Community Development Library (CDL)  
House 67-B, Road 9-A, Dhanmondi  
Dhaka 1209  
Bangladesh  
Tel: 880 2 811 0495  
Fax:880 2 811 0254  
Email:mohi2005@gmail.com

### South East Asia

To be elected

**Europe/Russia**

To be elected

**Western Europe**

To be elected

**Latin America and the Caribbean**

To be elected

**Mesoamerica**

Villagran, Felipe

MEROLEC, A.C.

Private Guanajuato No. 165

Plan de Ayala

Tuxtla, GTZ Chiapas

Mexico 29110

Tel: 52 961 671 5436

Fax: 52 961 671 5646

E-mail: lacandon@prodigy.net.mx

**South America**

Rocha, German

Corporación País Solidario "CPS"

Calle 70 No. 13-29

Bogota

Colombia

Tel: (571) 2495336

Fax:(571) 2491044

E-mail: cpscol@yahoo.com, cenprof@sky.net.co

**North America**

To be elected

**Indigenous Groups**

Mulenkei, Lucy

Indigenous Information Network

Box 74908-00200

City Square, Nairobi

Kenya

Tel: 254-20-2723958

Fax: 254-20-2729607

E-mail: iin@iin.co.ke

### **Annex 3 International Financial Institutions with specific policies or safeguards for indigenous peoples**

Provided here are links to the key safeguard policies of the main development finance agencies which have policies or safeguards specific to the rights and interests of indigenous peoples.

#### ***The World Bank Group*** [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

Revised Operational Policy 4.10

<http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/Institutional/Manuals/OpManual.nsf/B52929624EB2A3538525672E00775F66/0F7D6F3F04DD70398525672C007D08ED?OpenDocument>

Revised Procedure on Indigenous Peoples BP 4.10

<http://wbln0018.worldbank.org/Institutional/Manuals/OpManual.nsf/B52929624EB2A3538525672E00775F66/0F7D6F3F04DD70398525672C007D08ED?OpenDocument>

#### ***Asian Development Bank*** [www.adb.org](http://www.adb.org)

Policy on Indigenous Peoples

[http://www.adb.org/Documents/Policies/Indigenous\\_Peoples/ADB-1998-Policy-on-IP.pdf](http://www.adb.org/Documents/Policies/Indigenous_Peoples/ADB-1998-Policy-on-IP.pdf)

#### ***Inter-American Development Bank*** [www.iadb.org](http://www.iadb.org)

Operational Policy 765: Indigenous Peoples

<http://www.iadb.org/sds/doc/ind-111PolicyE.pdf>

#### ***United Nations Development Programme*** [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)

Policy of Engagement with Indigenous Peoples

<http://regionalcentrebangkok.undp.or.th/practices/governance/ripp/docs/PolicyOfEngagement.pdf>

#### ***International Finance Corporation*** [www.ifc.org](http://www.ifc.org) (not an executing or implementing agency)

Performance Standard 1: Social and Environmental Assessment

[http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/enviro.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/pol\\_PerformanceStandards2006\\_full/\\$FILE/IFC+Performance+Standards.pdf](http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/enviro.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/pol_PerformanceStandards2006_full/$FILE/IFC+Performance+Standards.pdf)

Performance Standard 5: Land Acquisition

[http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/enviro.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/pol\\_PerformanceStandards2006\\_full/\\$FILE/IFC+Performance+Standards.pdf](http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/enviro.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/pol_PerformanceStandards2006_full/$FILE/IFC+Performance+Standards.pdf)

Performance Standard 7: Indigenous Peoples

[http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/enviro.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/pol\\_PerformanceStandards2006\\_full/\\$FILE/IFC+Performance+Standards.pdf](http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/enviro.nsf/AttachmentsByTitle/pol_PerformanceStandards2006_full/$FILE/IFC+Performance+Standards.pdf)

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Cover photograph: Karen upland rice fields  
in Chiang Mai, Thailand, 2003

Photo: Helen Leake