

BUILDING COUNTRY CAPACITY TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

Providing people, institutions, and developing countries with the tools and training to make choices about the environment is a critical element of Global Environment Facility (GEF) climate change projects. By strengthening countries' capacity to reduce poverty and promote sustainable livelihoods, the GEF helps create an enabling environment for mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Capacity building is a fundamental element of GEF's support to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). A review undertaken by the GEF Implementing Agencies found that GEF support for capacity building activities in all its focal areas exceeded \$1.5 billion.

Capacity building is not a "one size fits all" formula, but rather a country-driven assessment of the specific needs and conditions of developing countries, reflecting nationally sustainable development strategies, priorities, and initiatives.

Recognizing this diversity, the GEF provides support for National Capacity Self-Assessments (NCSAs) to assist countries with assessing their capacity needs. NCSAs are flexible, powerful tools to help countries analyze national priorities and identify how best to mobilize and allocate resources to implement the major environmental conventions—UNFCCC, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification—in a coordinated and cost-effective manner. The NCSAs provide resources to mobilize linkages at the local levels of the three conventions.

To date, the GEF has contributed more than \$25 million to help 153 countries assess their environmental governance and capacity needs through NCSAs.

As one participant from Georgia said, "NCSAs are not only about an assessment or an action plan, but about changing the mind-sets, approaches, and attitudes that are so crucial for global environmental management."

The GEF initiated a Global Support Program managed jointly by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) to provide technical backstopping to countries and to ensure timely completion of NCSAs. The support program is structured as a learning process and knowledge management mechanism, emphasizing the information and knowledge generated by the NCSA process.

Currently, the Global Support Program is organizing 10 regional and subregional training and exchange workshops to address technical and implementation issues, while promoting the exchange of experiences and networking.

SPECIAL FOCUS ON LDCS AND SIDS

The UNFCCC asked that the GEF recognize the special circumstances of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). In response, the GEF is developing operational modalities and project criteria to launch a country capacity building program for LDCs and SIDS. The country program is to be applied in conjunction with funding available to

all eligible developing countries for follow-up on NCSAs and will aim to provide limited financing at the country level based on the specific needs brought to light through an NCSA. This program specifically seeks to help LDCs and SIDS build up their capacities for adaptation and mitigation.

INDICATORS

The GEF is developing targets and indicators for measuring the results and impacts of capacity building activities. Analytical work necessary to propose indicators is currently being conducted to allow effective benchmarking and assessment of capacity building activities supported by the GEF, in collaboration with the monitoring

and evaluation units of the GEF, UNDP, UNEP, World Bank, and UNFCCC Secretariat.

CIVIL SOCIETY

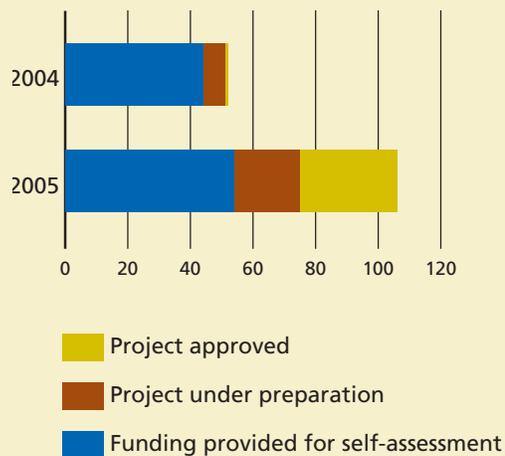
GEF's Small Grants Programme (SGP) will strengthen national capacities by continuously increasing involvement of NGOs and community groups in climate change activities. In the past year alone, the SGP awarded 174 grants for climate change projects to NGOs and community-based organizations. These grants total \$4.59 million in GEF financing, in addition to \$4.61 million in cofinancing. These projects help countries avoid greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the risks of global climate change.

NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT PROGRAM

The GEF funds national communications for non-Annex 1 countries in the UNFCCC. Through GEF's National Communications Support Program (NCSP), implemented by UNDP and UNEP, countries can receive support and technical assistance for national communications. These national communications enable countries to analyze their greenhouse gas emissions and vulnerability to climate change. Countries can also develop climate change action plans and identify technology needs in their national communications.

Currently, a majority of the non-Annex 1 partners have requested GEF funds for the self-assessment exercise, the first step in preparing project proposals for national communications. Since April 2004, UNDP and UNEP have approved 103 country requests for assistance to conduct stock-taking.

STATUS OF GEF FINANCING TO SUPPORT SECOND NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS, 2004-2005



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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