



## **GEF CSO Network**

### **Statement on Agenda 15 : [Report of the Chairperson of the STAP](#)**

**69th GEF Council, 4 June 2025**

The GEF CSO Network welcomes the comprehensive report presented by the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) and strongly supports the recommendations outlined in the report, particularly those aimed at strengthening the role of Indigenous Peoples in GEF governance, project design, and implementation.

#### **Key Points of Support and Recommendations:**

**1. Strengthening Indigenous Peoples' Role in Governance:**

We echo the call for institutionalizing Indigenous Peoples' representation within GEF decision-making bodies. Indigenous Peoples must be recognized as equal partners in shaping GEF strategies and programs, aligning with international frameworks

**2. Co-Designing Projects with Indigenous Peoples and CSOs:**

The report rightly emphasizes the importance of co-designing projects and programs with Indigenous Peoples. We urge GEF to incorporate this into guidance and for GEF agencies to establish procedures to empower CSOs, IPLC, women and youth in the preparation of GEF projects and programs

**3. Expanding Access to Finance:**

Direct, long-term, and flexible funding is critical for empowering both Indigenous Peoples and CSOs to move from vision to implementation. We encourage the GEF to scale-up initiatives like the Small Grants Programme and the Inclusive Conservation Initiative and explore other innovative financing mechanisms that enhance access for these key groups.

**4. Integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems:**

Integrating Indigenous and Western knowledge systems is vital for biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation, and other environmental objectives. We support measures to incorporate Indigenous perspectives into project design.

**5. Enhancing Indigenous People and CSO Engagement:**

We urge GEF to prioritize Indigenous Peoples and CSO for capacity-building and ensure their active participation in project design, implementation, and monitoring.

On the recommendations made by STAP for GEF 9, the GEF CSO Network comments as follows:

On Recommendation NO 1. Build an overarching GEF-9 theory of change to drive portfolio-wide investment, The CSO Network work emphasizes use of the whole of society approach in GEF 9.

We support recommendation 2 investing in innovative solutions and recommendation 3 to support policy coherence at multiple levels, and encourage effective engagement of Civil society in this approach

We fully support Recommendation 4 to enhance the role of civil society within project design and prioritizing civil society capacity strengthening.

We support Recommendation 5 and will work to support measures to positively influence market transformation Call to Action:

**The GEF CSO Network calls on the GEF Council, Secretariat, and Agencies to adopt the recommendations outlined in the STAP report and take concrete steps to enhance the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, CSOs, Local Communities, women and youth in GEF processes and programmes.**