



## GEF CSO Network

### Statement on Agenda 07 : [Relations with Conventions and Other International Institutions](#)

69th GEF Council, June 2025

The GEF-CSO Network acknowledges the relevance of document GEF/C.69/06/Rev.1, “Relations with Conventions and Other International Institutions,” for civil society engagement within the GEF framework. This document offers critical insights into the GEF’s evolving collaboration with multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), including the UNFCCC, CBD, UNCCD, and the Stockholm and Minamata Conventions.

The Document highlights **recent convention decisions** that directly requested GEF to enhance its support to Indigenous peoples and Local communities, women and youth including:

***CBD COP 16:*** Further requested the Global Environment Facility to explore ways to further improve, **facilitate access to and increase direct funding for indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth**, ensuring that those resources support their rights and knowledge systems

***UNFCCC COP29*** encouraged the Global Environment Facility to clearly outline in its work programmes **how Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities can meaningfully engage in the development of Global Environment Facility programmes and projects and benefit therefrom**;

***UNCCD COP16*** Welcomed the GEF Land Degradation Focal Area Strategy’s **emphasis on people in vulnerable situations such as women, children, youth, Indigenous Peoples, local communities and traditional communities**.

***GEF needs to ensure that this convention guidance is fully incorporated into its strategies, programs and projects moving forward.***

We also underscore the importance to Civil society of this update on GEF’s work with Conventions for the following reasons:

**Strategic Alignment** – The document outlines current and future priorities of the GEF in relation to global conventions. This allows civil society to align its actions and proposals with multilateral environmental agendas, increasing relevance and impact.

**Transparency and Accountability** – By reviewing institutional partnerships and coordination mechanisms, the document contributes to greater transparency—an essential condition for meaningful civil society participation.

**Opportunities for Engagement** – The update on inter-institutional cooperation provides civil society with a clearer understanding of entry points for policy dialogue and project development within the GEF and across related international frameworks.

We encourage the Council to ensure that the principles of inclusiveness and participatory governance, highlighted in this document, are operationalized through formal channels of civil society engagement. We also urge further clarification on how these institutional relationships translate into direct opportunities for grassroots organizations, particularly Indigenous Peoples, women-led groups, and youth.

**Moving forward the GEF's must continue and expand its commitment to multi-stakeholder collaboration and policy coherence across the environmental governance system.**