



20th to 23rd March 2023, Maputo,
Mozambique

GEF EXPANDED CONSTITUENCY WOKSHOP



Prepared by:
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I Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the GEF Secretariat for sponsoring the participation of Civil Society representatives at the Expanded Constituency Workshop which was hosted by the Government of Mozambique.

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to Susan Waithaka, Country Relations and Regine Mpoyi, Robert T. Schreiber and the facilitation efforts from Gabriella Ulfsdotter Richardson as well as the entire GEF Secretariat who attended the ECW Workshop.

Finally, I extend sincere gratitude to GEF SGP Coordinators representing Africa and Mozambique respectively, the participating CSOs from around the countries in the sub-region in view of the enthusiasm and lessons they shared with their counterparts, which, in our view; provided an opportunity to learn of best practices worth emulating.

Malintle C. Kheleli, RFP, Southern Africa, 2023.

II EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The GEF Expanded Constituency Workshop (ECW) is a component of the Country Support Programme (CSP) and the following were invited to attend; Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe for the Southern African Constituency from 20th to 24th March, 2023.

III Attendance

The ECW was attended by Country Contact Points (CCPs) representatives of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) from the above named countries.



Country Contact Points from the representative countries in Southern Africa

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *About Expanded Constituency Workshops*

Within the framework of the Country Support Programme (CSP), the GEF organises Expanded Constituency Workshops (ECWs). The main objective of ECWs is to provide a forum for GEF Focal Points, Convention's Focal Points, representatives of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) including partners and agencies from each of the participating countries to learn about GEF strategies, policies and procedures and gain a better understanding of the GEF as the funding mechanism for the Conventions it serves.

The workshop is an opportunity for different national partners to meet with their counterparts from other countries in the region, staff from the GEF Secretariat, the GEF Agencies and other GEF partners to share lessons and experiences from the development and the implementation of GEF projects and their integration within national policy frameworks. Additionally, these workshops can encourage coordination among national officials and allow better understanding among constituency members.

These workshops are organised annually by the GEF Secretariat. The workshop covers participation for representatives from each country, GEF Political Focal Point, GEF Operational Focal Point, three of the four national Convention Focal Points (CBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC, and the Stockholm Convention), as well as representatives from CSOs.

2 Workshop composition and proceedings

2.1 Structure and Presentations of the Workshop

The workshop was a five day whose composition was structured in the following manner:

- **Day 1- 20th March 2023** - Delivering High Quality Project in the GEF 8
- **Day2-21st March 2023** – Ensuring an Inclusive Participation of the GEF Partners
- **Day 3- 22nd March 2023**- Knowledge and Learning Day
- **Day 4-23rd March 2023** – Empowering Focal Points and the start of Climate Change Adaptation Workshop
- **Day 5- 24th March 2023**- Continuation of Climate Change Adaptation Workshop

The themes provided above were unfolded in the presentations that includes;

- Engagement with Civil Society
- Small Grants Programme
- Youth/ CSO Session
- Communications at the GEF
- Blended Finance
- Adaptation Fund
- GEF Agencies
- LDCF/SCCF

Comprehensive presentation and proceedings of the workshop can be attainable at the GEF website: www.thegef.org

2.2. Overview on the GEF

Susan Waithaka from the GEF Secretariat gave an overview of the GEF. She explained that in order to better align with national priorities, leverage community potential and local resources and promote better adoption and scalability, GEF is continuously engaging with all stakeholders at country level through ECWs to better a platform for key decision-making processes with respect to the GEF mandate. She concluded by adding that the CSOs also participate in these activities as partners within the GEF structure.

2.3 GEF8 Replenishment

It was explained that the GEF Council requests the Trustee, in cooperation with the Secretariat, to initiate discussions on the replenishment of resources of the GEF Trust Fund.

The replenishment meetings provide an opportunity for Contributing Participants to review GEF performance and evaluate progress, assess future funding needs, and agree on a financing framework.

Documents and information about the GEF-8 replenishment are posted on the GEF website www.thegef.org.

2.4 Participants in GEF Replenishment

Invited participants are existing and potential Contributing Participants, four representatives from non-donor recipient countries representing Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, two CSO representatives each representing a donor country-based CSO and another representing a recipient country, two representatives of the private sector, and representatives of GEF Agencies and the conventions for which the GEF serves as a financial mechanism.

2. 5 Overview of the GEF CSO Network (GCN)



The Regional Focal Point (RFP), Malintle Kheleli,

The Regional Focal Point also made a presentation on the GCN governing structure and its operations. She highlighted that in an effort to develop and strengthen capacity of the GCN, GEF has outsourced consultant to conduct interviews on the best partnership which started with the current RFPs. The initiative is meant to build a sustainable framework that will assist on what works and what doesn't and how to make things work better. In addition, she called for collaboration amongst the CSOs and focal points at country level in order to obtain maximum outcome on environmental initiatives. She outlined the objectives of the network as thus:

Objectives of the GEF CSO Network

- Enhance the engagement of CSOs at country and regional level in GEF 8 implementation.
- Inform CSOs about the GEF CSO Network, options of CSOs involvement in programmes and projects of GEF and GEF8 processes.
- Obtain feedback on the current level of engagement of civil society in GEF projects in the region and identify options to enhance this.
- Identify key issues to bring to the attention of the GEF as well as to look at ways to enhance the level of Network activities at country and regional level.

The expected outputs:

- CSOs are encouraged, inspired and enhanced their engagement at country and regional level in GEF 8 implementation.
- CSO Representatives are well informed about the GEF CSO Network, options of CSOs involvement in programmes and projects of GEF and GEF8 processes.
- CSO provided feedback and recommended on the current level of engagement of civil society in GEF projects in the region and identified options to enhance it.
- Consulted on the identified key issues and brought the attention of the GEF SEC Official's attention to enhance the level of Network activities at country and regional level.

2.6. Youth and CSOs Session

The Maputo ECW 2023 was distinct by pulling stakeholders across all levels of the population including the youth, SGP grantee, regional and local CSOs as well as the long serving GCN Chair (global level) and he is a former Southern Africa FRP. The dialogue was meant to exchange knowledge and best practices attained through GEF funding.



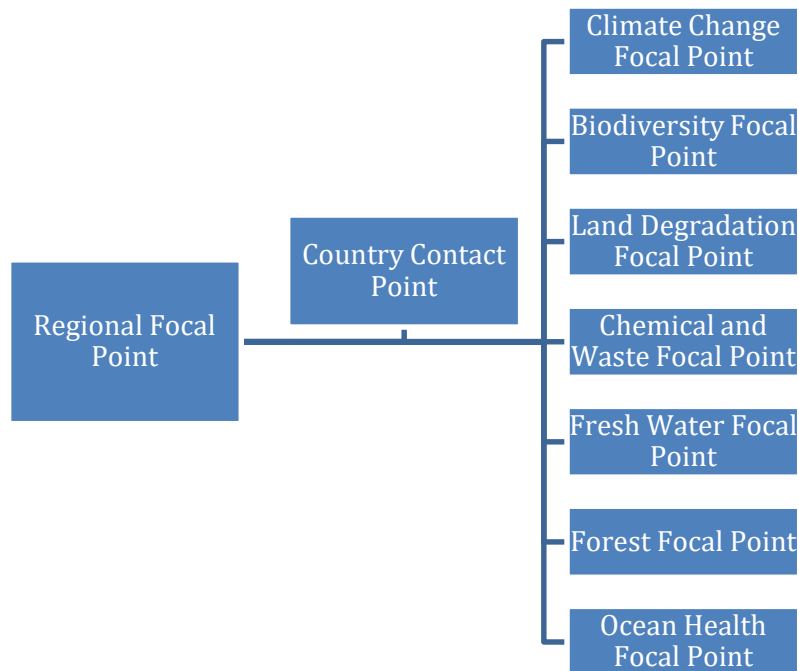
Case study presentation from a cross section of CSO Representatives from the sub-region

3. Parallel meeting of the Country Contact Point (CCPs) and the RFP

The Maputo ECW also served as an opportunity for CCPs to physically meet with RFP and other GEF family members. The GEF Small Grant Programme Regional Coordinator also joined the meeting and explain further on the programme should be uniformly operating across all sub regional countries. The discussion was mainly on Southern Africa GCN development. The RFP pointed out that the next step after their appointment is to recruit many local CSOs/CBOs from their respective countries. Furthermore, they were tasked to outsource focal points as per GEF thematic areas as a response to the conclusion made by the GCN Coordinating Committee.

- ❖ Biodiversity
- ❖ Chemical and Waste
- ❖ Climate change
- ❖ Forest
- ❖ Freshwater
- ❖ Land degradation
- ❖ Ocean Health

Gender, Capacity development and knowledge Management will be cross cutting issue in all thematic areas.



The relay of the reporting structure

3.1 Challenges and capacity strengthening needs and opportunities for CSOs

After a well tabulated governing structure of the GCN Southern Africa, the key concern was on the operational ignition since there was no budget in place to cater for coordination and facilitation. As a result, GCN at country level remains passive which makes it difficult to attract new members.

Another large challenge is to build the capacity of the most vulnerable, and supporting basic skill development of new community based organizations, e.g. for budget planning and proposal development. Representatives recognized the bottleneck of developing and maintaining relationships within the GEF ECWs after meetings, as well as the need to maintain institutional memory and technical expertise within CSOs.

Participants identified key challenges experienced in the process, such as a need to enhance the absorptive capacity of countries to be able to prepare projects fairly fast and work strictly within the required timeframe when countries' strategies are being developed. Various stakeholders identified the need to better represent CSOs and particularly women on national and steering committees, the consideration of social inclusion in the selection of grantees, and the participation of CSOs from all countries.

3.2 Agreements/ Inputs/Suggestions:

- Facilitate collaboration between GCN and existing Environment Networks at country and regional level
- There should be a representation and participation of CSO in the National Steering Committee of the GEF to improve the operations of CSOs in GEF related projects and increase the capacity for their involvement, as well as provide bottom-up feedback to feed policies/plans/development strategies to enhance visibility of GEF Projects
- CSO's should work together across shared objectives and present joint proposals. It was proposed that there is a need to develop our regional strategy (domesticated strategy) to simplify interventions modalities. Subsequently, there should be an annual GEF CSOs Southern Africa Forum/dialogue to address the strategic plan.
- GEF implementing Agencies should engage CSOs in the development of the PIF, implementation and monitoring of the projects.
- Capacity building is needed for Local CSOs to access MSP funding, share information and develop applications for MSPs based on a common focal area, formation of modalities concerning CSO involvement in in all phases of project development.
- Mobilise resources for coordination and facilitation of CSOs interventions

- CSOs in the region should provide valuable guidance and advice to governments on specific environmental and ecological challenges prevailing on grassroots people.
- SGP is a strong and practical instrument for CSOs involvement in GEF funded projects therefore 50% of its steering committee should be CSOs.
- Participants recognized that CSOs need to get into the habit of publishing findings and lessons learnt. Results should be collected in a uniform manner and published on open-access databases to avoid replication.

3.3 Way Forward

Expanding the CSO-GEF membership to be more representative including:

- Marginalized and specialized groups to enrich the composition. Give publicity and generally strengthen the network at national level;
- Generally, strengthen the capacity of CSO's at local and national level. Thematic trainings should be identified;
- Establish a designated platform which will be used among others to share experiences, explore capacity building opportunities among others.
- Create a strong collaboration with GEF Family stakeholders at national level



Finally, CCPs agreed on the following action points to be completed by 30th May 2023:

1. Development of regional strategic plan. CCPs should share their respective country strategies and focal areas.
2. Plan for dialogue meeting to be held in some countries.
3. Reporting Strategy
4. Development of a regional MSP pilot project

4.Excursion

Participants also attended the learning trip to one of the biodiversity conservation park in Maputo. The park staff gave detailed lesson on shared benefits on conserving biodiversity which translates to economic growth, poverty reduction, balancing of the natural ecosystems, entrepreneurship capacity development amongst many others.



A field trip excursion in the Maputo National Park



APPENDIX: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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