



GEF CSO Network Statement on

Agenda 02 : [Summary of Negotiations of the Ninth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund](#)

71th GEF Council Meeting, May 31- June 3, 2026

Naomi, Council members, ladies and gentlemen, Good Morning,

The GEF CSO Network welcomes the Summary of Negotiations of the Ninth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund and the enormous amount of work that has taken place over the past 18 months to support a robust GEF Replenishment.

We also thank the GEF for facilitating the participation of the representatives of the GEF CSO Network in all the Replenishment Meetings. This has demonstrated GEFs commitment to the Whole of Society Approach.

The strong support of all of the participants in the GEF-9 Replenishment process for strengthening the active engagement of CSOs, IPLC, Women and Youth in GEF 9 have led to a number of very important new elements to be included in the programming and policy directions and other key elements.

We would like to highlight two key elements for praise including:

1. A package of measures to be introduced to enhance the level of GEF financing to IPLCs, women and youth including:
 - a. The adoption of an Aspirational Target of 20 percent of GEF-9 programming to be directed toward actions by IPLCs
 - b. The updating by Mid-2027 of the 2012 Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples.
 - c. The Refinement by 2028 of [all relevant] GEF financing mechanisms, policies and guidelines to ensure their responsiveness to IPLCs, women, and youth.
2. The agreement to allocate \$100 million of GEF-9 resources to directly support the GEF 9 Inclusive Conservation Initiative (for financing of action by Indigenous Peoples). This represents a 300% increase over GEF7 and GEF 8 funding.

With regard to the Aspirational Target of 20% of GEF-9 programming to be directed toward actions by IPLC - This is a very important step for the GEF Trust Fund - bringing it in line with a similar commitment already made 4 years ago for the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF). In order to ensure the effective implementation of this new commitment a number of clear actions are needed:

- a) A clear definition of "Actions by IPLC" to enable clear guidance to project proponents and developers as well as to enable effective implementation and tracking. We propose that this: i) build on the ongoing work to finalise guidelines for tracking support for IPLCs by the GBFF; ii) draw on the extensive experience of the GEF CSO Network and its members in developing and implementing projects and programmes for IPLCs.



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- b) An effective tracking mechanism is established to ensure that commitment levels at project approval are implemented, monitored and reported during project implementation.

With regard to the GEF Small Grants Programme SGP - we are disappointed that despite apparent strong support during the replenishment process to increase the level of resources for the SGP - the final allocation adopted only maintained a similar level of support as in GEF 8. Taking into account the decline in purchasing power of the US\$ - this represents a significant decline in real resource allocation. We are therefore happy that from the beginning of GEF 9, Recipient Countries will be able to allocate a portion of their STAR resources to enhance the level of SGP funding in their countries. Given the strong results demonstrated by successive evaluations of the SGP as well as the strong positive feedback from many recipient countries - we call for a robust process to be undertaken in the next 12 months to enhance the level of SGP resources in line with the commitment for the 20% of resources for IPLCs.

We also note positively the call in the replenishment documents for the strengthening of the execution roles of regional and national NGOs and CSOs in SGP programming. We hope that this will be systematically done to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of SGP programming.

Finally - we congratulate all of the donor countries that have already pledged funding support to the GEF-9. However, we note with some concern that a number of countries that have previously been core GEF donors - have yet to finalise their pledges for GEF 9. While we acknowledge the ongoing work by these countries to secure resources, we call on them to expedite the process, to enable effective planning and use of GEF 9 resources.

In closing, we would like to highlight that although the GEF 9 Replenishment is robust – the overall level of finance does not match the urgency of environmental challenges and the clear needs from recipient countries. GEF must redouble efforts to scale up and enhance leverage of resources to meet collective global 2030 targets.