



GEF National Dialogue Initiative

Guide to Conducting a Global Environment Facility (GEF) National Dialogue

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Table of Contents

Overview of the GEF National Dialogue Initiative	2
OBJECTIVES OF THE NATIONAL DIALOGUES	2
A NEW VISION FOR THE GEF AND THE NATIONAL DIALOGUES	3
DIALOGUE APPROACH	4
Organizing a National Dialogue	6
KEY ROLE OF THE GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT	6
<i>Checklist for the office of the GEF OFP</i>	7
KEY ROLE OF THE UNDP COUNTRY OFFICE	8
<i>Checklist for UNDP Country Office</i>	8
DEVELOPING DIALOGUE OBJECTIVES, EXPECTED RESULTS, AND AGENDA	8
SUGGESTED DIALOGUE COMPONENTS	9
Inaugural session	9
Presentations	9
Working groups	10
Field visit session	10
Evaluation	10
Closing Session	10
IDENTIFYING AND INVITING PARTICIPANTS	11
DIALOGUE CHAIRPERSONS, RESOURCE PERSONS, AND FACILITATORS	11
SELECTING DIALOGUE VENUE	12
DISTRIBUTION AND ACCESS TO DIALOGUE MATERIALS	12
Dialogue results and recommendations	13
DIALOGUE FOLLOW UP	14
Financing available for a National Dialogue	14
COSTS <u>NOT</u> COVERED BY GEF NDI	14
PROCEDURES FOR ACCESSING DIALOGUE FUNDS	14
Lessons Learned: Factors that have contributed to the success of past Dialogues	16
GEF National Dialogue Initiative contact information	17
Annex 1: Examples of National Dialogue objectives and agendas	18

Guide to Conducting a GEF National Dialogue

This *Guide to Conducting a GEF National Dialogue* has been prepared as a planning tool for Dialogue organizers and facilitators. It is intended to guide Dialogue organizers through the planning and organization of a National Dialogue by providing detailed advice and checklists.

Overview of the GEF National Dialogue Initiative

The GEF National Dialogue Initiative (NDI) supports country-level dialogues on issues and themes related to the GEF. National Dialogues provide a forum for consultations on global environmental management and national sustainable development issues in GEF recipient countries. They offer an opportunity for GEF partners to engage in dialogue with key stakeholders representing a wide range of national and local interests and areas of expertise. National Dialogues aim to raise awareness about the GEF, strengthen country coordination and ownership, and link country GEF priorities and strategies to broader national environment and development processes. Approximately twelve National Dialogues are held every year.

The GEF NDI is implemented by UNDP based on strategic guidance provided by the GEF Secretariat (GEFSec). The GEF NDI coordination unit is located at UNDP headquarters in New York. The NDI is governed by an Inter-Agency Steering Committee composed of the GEF Secretariat (Chair), the GEF Implementing and Executing Agencies, and the GEF NGO Network.¹ The Steering Committee sets the overall direction of the program and provides guidance on specific aspects of the program including Dialogue methodology, establishment of country selection criteria, selection of countries, and organization of dialogues. At the country level, each National Dialogue is managed as a collaborative effort involving the national GEF Focal Points, the GEFSec, and the IAs/EAs. The UNDP has been requested by the GEF partner agencies to use effectively its country office system to facilitate the planning, organization, and delivery of the Dialogues.

The NDI builds upon experiences and lessons gained from an earlier program, the GEF Country Dialogue Workshops (CDW). The NDI also responds to recommendations of the GEF Assembly, the Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund, and the Overall Performance Study of the GEF – all of which have called for greater efforts to strengthen national focal point capacity and enhance country involvement in the GEF.

Objectives of the National Dialogues

The main objectives of the GEF National Dialogue Initiative are to assist GEF recipient countries by:

- * Promoting in-depth understanding of the GEF's strategic directions, policies and procedures.
- * Strengthening country coordination and ownership in GEF operations and sharing lessons learned from project implementation.

¹ The GEF Implementing Agencies are UNDP, UNEP, and the World Bank. The Executing Agencies are ADB, AfDB, EBRD, IADB, FAO, IFAD, and UNIDO. For more information, please see the *Focal Point Handbook: An Introduction to the GEF*.

- * Achieving greater mainstreaming of GEF activities into national planning frameworks and coordination and synergies amongst the GEF focal areas and convention issues at the national level.

A New Vision for the GEF and the National Dialogues

At the December 2006 GEF Council meeting, GEF Chairperson and CEO Monique Barbut outlined a new vision to increase the efficiency and impact of the GEF, encapsulated in a five-point sustainability compact:

- Strategy: Shifting from a project-driven to a strategic, programmatic approach
- Innovation: Using GEF funds as “seed money” for financing innovative and entrepreneurial efforts and technologies
- Equity: Helping vulnerable countries get concrete results from the use of limited resources
- Focus: Introducing a redesigned project cycle where a proposal takes, on average, no more than 22 months from identification to start of implementation
- Access: Appointing an “Ombudsman” in the GEF Secretariat to respond to country concerns, and enhancing the effectiveness of GEF corporate programs such as the Small Grants Programme, National Dialogue Initiative, and Country Support Program

In this new context, the National Dialogues should ideally act as catalysts for policy change towards integrating the GEF and global environmental issues in comprehensive national planning frameworks and programs. The Dialogues will center on building synergies between the GEF and broader environment and development strategies in countries, for example, by linking with existing national consultations and planning processes involving IAs, EAs, or other donors. As such, the Dialogues should focus on the GEF as providing incremental support to countries within the context of other donor programs in the country.

The broader national planning frameworks and policy dialogues that should be taken into consideration in organizing a GEF National Dialogue include:

- Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) is the World Bank's business plan for an individual country, prepared in consultation with governments, civil society organizations, development partners, and other stakeholders.
- Common Country Assessment (CCA) is the instrument of the United Nations system for analyzing a country's development situation to identify key development issues, taking into account national priorities as well as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other international commitments and conventions.
- United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) emerges from the CCA and provides an integrated United Nations system response to national needs and priorities within the framework of the MDGs.

- Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) are prepared by most developing countries through a participatory process that engages both national and external development partners, resulting in a comprehensive, long-term perspective for poverty reduction.
- UNEP environmental dialogues in post-conflict countries
- IADB Country Environmental Assessments
- Regional projects and programs under the auspices of regional initiatives and organizations such as [CARICOM](#), [CCAD](#), [NEPAD](#), [SADC](#), [SAARC](#), [SPREP](#)
- National and sectoral development plans
- Country convention commitments
- Processes convened by environmental donor roundtables in countries

Dialogue Approach

The objectives of the NDI are realized through a series of multi-stakeholder National Dialogues organized and conducted with the collaboration of the national GEF Political and Operational Focal Points, the GEFSec, and the IAs/EAs. The Dialogue approach is intended to be flexible and respond to the needs and circumstances of each country. GEF Operational Focal Points take the lead in organizing the Dialogues with guidance provided by the GEF National Dialogue Initiative coordination unit and in-country IA and EA offices. The recommended duration of a Dialogue is two days, but, depending on the objectives, an additional day may be added for further discussions or a field visit to a GEF project/s.

The design and objectives of each multi-stakeholder Dialogue, while dealing primarily with GEF matters in the context of national environment and development strategies and processes, are tailored to meet the specific needs of participating countries. The Dialogues typically involve an array of GEF stakeholders including governments (national, regional, and local), national GEF Focal Points and Council Members, Convention focal points, GEF/SGP National Coordinators and National Steering Committee members, non-governmental organizations, indigenous and local communities, IA and EA country-based staff, bilateral and other donors working in the country, and private sector representatives.

In the 2006 GEF Subregional Consultations, GEF Focal Points specified a number of priority topics that could be effectively covered in National Dialogues:

- Developing national GEF strategies and setting priorities
- Establishing national GEF coordination mechanisms
- Integrating GEF into national plans and programs
- Tracking national GEF portfolios and assessing results
- Improving communications and outreach to key stakeholders
- Creating tools and methodologies to support institutional memory

- Developing regional strategies and projects

Additional topics addressed in Dialogues conducted over the past three years include:

- Building capacity of national agencies for development and implementation of projects
- Identifying synergies among existing and proposed multi-and bi-laterally funded projects
- Exploring and strengthening the potential role of the private sector
- Capturing lessons learned through the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) and identifying opportunities for up-scaling local experiences

Organizing a National Dialogue

Once the dates for a National Dialogue are agreed upon, the GEF Operational Focal Point communicates with the UNDP Country Office and, if applicable, the UNEP and World Bank country offices to coordinate the planning and organization of the Dialogue. The GEF NDI coordination unit is available for consultation throughout this process.

Key role of the GEF Operational Focal Point

The GEF Operational Focal Point (OFP) takes the lead responsibility for organizing the Dialogue in close consultation with the GEF NDI coordination unit, the GEF Political Focal Point, the IAs/EAs in-country, and other national partners and agencies chosen by the OFP.

The GEF OFP defines the objectives of the Dialogue to meet the expressed needs of the country in relation to its GEF portfolio, pipeline, and global environmental priorities and plans in the context of broader national environment and development consultations, strategies, and activities. In defining the objectives, the OFP should have a good sense for the desired results and the methodologies to be employed to achieve those results. The GEF NDI coordination unit is ready to provide advice and examples of past Dialogues to assist in identifying objectives, methodologies, and expected results.

The OFP is responsible for ensuring that the Dialogue is tailored to meet specific national needs, and that all relevant GEF projects and other initiatives in the GEF focal areas are represented. For example, it is suggested that the OFP prepare an overview presentation for the Dialogue on national environment and development priorities and strategies as they relate to GEF activities. The OFP may wish to request that others, such as the national biodiversity, climate change, land degradation, international waters, and POPs focal points, prepare related presentations. It is recommended that the OFP share a draft of such presentations with the UNDP Country Office, other IA/EA country offices as applicable, and the GEF NDI coordination unit for feedback and to prepare the team of GEF resource persons in advance of the Dialogue.

In addition to identifying the Dialogue objectives and structuring the draft agenda, the tasks carried out under the direction of the OFP include: overseeing all local logistic arrangements, inviting the Dialogue participants, briefing local Dialogue facilitators and national focal points for the GEF focal areas, and supervising financial arrangements based on an agreed Dialogue budget.

While the GEF OFP coordinates the Dialogue organization, the overall process is a group effort that sets in motion an effective dialogue that involves a broad array of stakeholders. The OFP and other Dialogue organizers may wish to consider at the outset how best to establish a collaborative modality given their national circumstances.

Please visit the GEF NDI website, <http://www.undp.org/gef/dialogue>, for further information, materials, and recommendations of past Dialogues.

Checklist for the office of the GEF OFF

- 3 Participate in an initial conference call with GEF NDI coordination unit, GEFSec, UNDP Country Office (CO) for a full briefing on the Dialogue process
- 3 Participate in an initial planning meeting with UNDP CO to define Dialogue work plan based on conference call and this *Guide* (inform GEF NDI coordination unit)
- 3 Prepare and submit a draft Dialogue budget to GEF NDI coordination unit for review
- 3 Discuss and agree upon Dialogue objectives and prepare draft agenda that responds to those objectives, in cooperation with UNDP CO (send copy to GEF NDI coordination unit for review)
- 3 Discuss and agree upon list of participants with UNDP CO and relevant national partners as suggested below (inform GEF NDI coordination unit)
- 3 Secure Dialogue venue, ensuring adequate space for plenary and working group sessions
- 3 Identify national resource persons to facilitate working groups, chair sessions, and deliver presentations as necessary. Presenters and session chairs should be named in the agenda.
- 3 A second conference call may be held with the GEF NDI coordination unit and UNDP CO for the purpose of reviewing the agenda, list of participants, logistical arrangements, and roles and responsibilities of GEFSec and GEF IA/EA representatives in the Dialogue
- 3 Invite participants and request confirmation of their attendance
- 3 Finalize and distribute Dialogue agenda (including objectives, dates, and venue)
- 3 Provide guidance to speakers, chairpersons, presenters, facilitators, and rapporteurs
- 3 Distribute Dialogue materials in advance as required (preferably on CD-ROM)
- 3 Prepare guidance materials and methodology for working groups
- 3 Make necessary national travel arrangements for participants traveling from outside of the Dialogue location in cooperation with the UNDP CO
- 3 Attend to all on-site arrangements such as securing audio-visual equipment; ensuring coffee/tea and lunch breaks have been arranged; preparing Dialogue folders/CD-ROMs, registration nametags, sign-up sheets, etc.
- 3 Ensure sufficient copies of reference materials and handouts are available during Dialogue in plenary and working group rooms
- 3 Ensure adequate arrangements have been made to invite the media
- 3 Consider organizing an exhibition of ongoing GEF or GEF-related projects in parallel with the Dialogue
- 3 Participate in final planning meeting a day before the Dialogue with UNDP CO, GEFSec, GEF IAs/EAs, and GEF NDI representatives
- 3 Open the Dialogue with a defining message, participate in and chair relevant Dialogue sessions, and close with summary and conclusions
- 3 Prepare Dialogue summary report of recommendations and submit to NDI coordination unit

Key role of the UNDP Country Office

The UNDP CO, in coordination with the country offices of the World Bank and UNEP as appropriate, assists in planning and delivering the Dialogue. The UNDP country office also disburses Dialogue funds to the OFP. Please see the section below on “Financing available for a National Dialogue.”

Checklist for UNDP Country Office

- 3 Assign a UNDP CO focal point to assist the GEF OFP in Dialogue planning and organization as necessary; the focal point is also the liaison with the GEF NDI coordination unit
- 3 Participate in initial conference call with the OFP, GEF NDI coordination unit, GEFSec, and other agencies as appropriate (and follow-up conference calls as necessary)
- 3 Confirm the Dialogue dates, venue, and other arrangements with the OFP
- 3 Organize an initial planning meeting with the OFP, and other local IA/EA offices as appropriate, to define Dialogue work plan based on conference call and this *Guide* (inform GEF NDI coordination unit)
- 3 Review objectives, agenda, list of participants, and other materials prepared for Dialogue
- 3 Disburse Dialogue funds to the OFP based on an agreed budget
- 3 Participate in final planning meeting a day before the Dialogue with GEF OFP, GEFSec, GEF IAs/EAs, and GEF NDI representatives
- 3 Assist in chairing and facilitating Dialogue sessions as necessary
- 3 Upon conclusion of Dialogue, discuss and agree on follow up activities with OFP, GEFSec, and other GEF IAs/EAs, based on Dialogue recommendations

Developing Dialogue objectives, expected results, and agenda

A critical step in planning a Dialogue is to identify the Dialogue objectives in a reasonable and timely manner. The GEF OFP and other Dialogue organizers should assess which issues and themes involving the GEF are most significant for their country, always keeping in mind the links with ongoing broader national environment and development dialogues and processes. At the same time, it is important to consider the results that are expected – as well as possible to achieve given country circumstances. The Dialogues provide a unique opportunity to bring national GEF stakeholders together to discuss national and GEF thematic and funding priorities. Carefully thought-out objectives and expected results can help to ensure that the Dialogue makes a relevant and valuable contribution to enhancing the country’s involvement with the GEF.

The Dialogue agenda, participants, duration, and working group methodology depend on well-defined objectives and expected results. The agenda should be designed to achieve the stated objectives, and therefore should include well-crafted presentations, working group exercises, and plenary discussions necessary for this purpose.

It is recommended that the GEF OFP discuss a draft Dialogue agenda with the UNDP Country Office and GEF NDI coordination unit six weeks in advance of the scheduled Dialogue for review and comments.

Objectives, agendas, and reports/recommendations from past Dialogues are available online: http://cfapp2.undp.org/gef_dialogue/recommend/index.htm. Annex 1 also presents examples of Dialogue objectives and agendas from four recent Dialogues.

Suggested Dialogue components

Inaugural session

To initiate the Dialogue, opening statements are offered by the host government (usually at ministerial level) as well as representatives of the GEFSec and the heads of the IA/EA offices based in the country.

These opening remarks should be followed by an overview of the Dialogue objectives and agenda presented by the GEF OFP or NDI representative.

Chairing and facilitation is provided by GEF Focal Points and other designated national government and civil society representatives. GEFSec and IA/EA representatives (national and international) participate in presentations, plenary discussions, and working groups as required.

Presentations

Countries often request the NDI and GEF partners to provide information and updated guidance on GEF policies, strategies, and operations, including recent policy changes such as the new strategic objectives and the Resource Allocation Framework (RAF). In response to these country requests, the GEF NDI has prepared a number of thematic presentations that are available in multiple languages and that can be easily tailored to individual country needs. Examples of presentations available include the following, which are usually delivered by GEFSec and IA/EA representatives:

- Update on the GEF
- Resource Allocation Framework
- GEF at Country Level/National Coordination
- GEF and the Role of the Private Sector

In cases where the OFP requests additional presentations on specific topics, the NDI typically works with the OFP's team to prepare tailored presentations or other supporting material to meet country needs.

National representatives may prepare and give other presentations as determined by the Dialogue objectives and agenda. These presentations should optimally be prepared to respond to Dialogue objectives – rather than generic overviews – and to enable participants to better conceive of national priorities and strategies as they relate to the GEF.

As mentioned, the GEF OFP could prepare a presentation on national environment and development priorities and strategies in relation to the GEF, including a stocktaking of the national GEF portfolio. The OFP can also request the national biodiversity, climate change, land degradation, international waters, and POPs focal points to prepare targeted presentations on national GEF-related strategies, priorities, and projects. Some Dialogues also include complementary presentations on the GEF Small Grants Programme, if it is operational in the country, and national private sector involvement with the GEF.

It is recommended that all presentations be succinct, relevant, and no longer than thirty minutes. Provision should be made in the agenda for ample question-and-answer sessions, after each presentation or set of presentations.

Working groups

Most Dialogues held to date have found working groups to be an effective format to discuss key topics and obtain the views and recommendations of relevant stakeholders. However, it is important to note that for working groups to function well, they should be supplied with clear objectives and easy to understand guidelines about the methodology to be followed and the expected results. These guidelines should be reviewed in plenary before the working groups sessions and also be made available as handouts that are distributed to the groups.

Sufficient time should be set aside for working group sessions and reporting to plenary. Depending upon the objectives of the working group sessions, their duration may be between three to five hours, with an additional hour for reporting to plenary. It is recommended that each working group be designated a resource person and a rapporteur ahead of time who are able to facilitate effective participation and compile and report discussions and results to plenary.

Field visit session

Where appropriate and cost effective, a field visit to ongoing or completed projects supported by GEF funding could be organized, typically on a third Dialogue day. The field visit serves to familiarize senior decision-makers, the media, and other national agencies, civil society, and the private sector with the GEF's work in the country. It also provides the opportunity for all participants to link issues raised during the Dialogue to practical experiences in the field. The objectives of the field visit and information about the project/s should be provided ahead of time, and resource persons designated who are familiar with the project and will be able to lead a wrap-up discussion at the end of the visit.

Due to the length of the Dialogue and the time commitment required, the field visit may be optional for participants. In order to facilitate logistical planning, participants should be asked in the Dialogue invitation to indicate whether they will attend the field visit session.

Evaluation

Sometime before the conclusion of the Dialogue, the organizers should allocate 15 minutes for participants to complete an evaluation form. A suggested evaluation form is available from the NDI website: <http://www.undp.org/gef/dialogue/index.htm>. The evaluation will provide valuable feedback on the Dialogue, including the effectiveness of the presentations and suggestions for improvements in Dialogue facilitation and session design and content.

Closing Session

In closing the Dialogue, it is important that the OFP (or other senior government representative) reflect on the key discussions and results of the Dialogue and convey to the participants any follow-up actions that the government intends to take based on Dialogue recommendations, involving other participants and actors as necessary.

Identifying and inviting participants

Identifying appropriate institutions and individuals to participate in the Dialogue is a crucial step towards ensuring its success.

Participants should include those key stakeholders involved in the preparation and implementation of national and global environmental and energy strategies, policies, projects, and action plans. It is strongly recommended that participants be identified who have the working knowledge and authority to make interventions and commitments in this strategic policy dialogue on behalf of their institutions.

Specifically, it is suggested that participants could include:

- National GEF Focal Points and Council Members
- National and local government representatives (from a variety of sectors such as environment, planning, energy, forestry, agriculture, water resources, foreign affairs, etc.)
- Convention focal points and the coordinators of national climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, international waters, and POPs strategies and action plans.
- GEF SGP National Coordinator and National Steering Committee members
- Directors and/or key staff of GEF and other relevant projects
- GEF IA country staff (UNDP, UNEP, World Bank)
- GEF EA country staff (FAO, IFAD, UNIDO, ADB, AfDB, EBRD, IDB)
- Other multi- or bi-lateral donor staff
- Non-governmental organization representatives (GEF NGO network may be consulted)
- Academic and research institution staff
- Local members of GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP)
- Private sector representatives
- Media as appropriate

International representatives from the GEFSec, IAs, and EAs also typically participate.

Dialogue chairpersons, resource persons, and facilitators

Chairing and facilitation is provided by GEF Focal Points and other designated national representatives selected from the various groups attending the Dialogue: government ministries, NGOs, IA/EA staff, etc. Resource persons for the Dialogue typically include: GEF National Focal Points, Convention focal points, representatives from IAs/EAs and GEFSec.

It is recommended that the chairpersons, facilitators, and resource persons be identified well in advance of the Dialogue and named in the agenda. They should be adequately briefed about their expected roles and tasks. For example, chairpersons are charged with introducing presenters and resource people, keeping the presenters and sessions on schedule, encouraging dialogue while focusing the discussion on the most important and pertinent issues related to the overall Dialogue objectives. It is suggested that chairpersons be selected both for the stature they bring to the Dialogue, and their ability to perform these tasks. Resource persons and other facilitators should be available for consultation during working groups as well as to lead these and other exercises.

Selecting Dialogue venue

In choosing the venue, the Dialogue organizers may wish to take the following into consideration:

- Easy accessibility for participants should be considered. Ideally, the Dialogue should be held in a location that is convenient for those traveling to the venue from other regions within the country.
- The venue should be able to accommodate all of the participants comfortably in a plenary session. A face-to-face configuration conducive to dialogue is suggested, as opposed to a traditional classroom style configuration.
- Each working group should have a dedicated room with meeting table and chairs.
- Good audio-visual facilities for both presenters and participants should be available. A multi-media projector and laptop computer should be available in the plenary room, as well as laptop computers and/or flip charts in the working group rooms.
- There should be access to a photocopier, fax, and computer. An internet connection is desirable.
- In cases where simultaneous translation is required, the venue should be able to accommodate the necessary equipment. In such cases, the quality of the interpretation equipment should be a top priority.
- Adequate facilities for meals and coffee/tea breaks should be available.

Distribution and access to Dialogue materials

The GEF NDI has developed reference documents that may support, complement, or clarify some of the material presented in the plenary and working group sessions. It is suggested that copies of the handouts be reproduced in-country and made available prior to the Dialogue and/or included in the Dialogue folders. Reproduction of materials on CD-ROM may be more efficient and cost effective.

It is recommended that the following materials be distributed in timely fashion to the participants:

- Copies of Dialogue presentations
- Background documents prepared specifically for Dialogue plenary or working group sessions

- Relevant national strategies and action plans (in summary form and if not covered in presentations)
- GEF strategic objectives (updated)
- Dialogue evaluation form

If interpretation is necessary, these materials should be provided to the interpreters in advance of the Dialogue.

It is also recommended that the participants have ready access to the following GEF strategic documents (individual handouts are probably unnecessary):

- GEF Cofinancing Paper
- GEF Operational Strategy
- GEF Operational Programs
- Medium-Sized Projects
- The GEF Project Cycle
- Incremental Costs
- List of GEF Publications and Videos
- List of Acronyms
- List of Useful Websites
- Glossary of Terms

Copies of these documents should be available for consultation in plenary or working group sessions. They could also be included on CD-ROMs to distribute to participants, rather than hard copies, thereby conserving both time and resources.

Copies of the above materials may be downloaded from the NDI website, http://cfapp2.undp.org/gef_dialogue/guidance/index.htm, and the GEF website, <http://www.gefweb.org>, and are also available on CD-ROM upon request.

Dialogue results and recommendations

The Dialogue organizers are encouraged to prepare a brief report outlining the key discussions, outcomes, and recommendations of the Dialogue for distribution to the participants and key decision-makers as appropriate. It is recommended that the GEF OFP and other Dialogue organizers designate one or more rapporteur/s to “record the dialogue.” It is preferable that the report be prepared in an accessible, well-organized format that will generate interest and promote taking action on specified points and tasks. The

report should be produced and distributed immediately after the Dialogue to build upon the momentum generated by the event.

A copy of the report should be sent to the GEF NDI coordination unit so that it can be posted on the NDI website and thus contribute to sharing of experiences among countries. Examples of past Dialogue recommendations are available on the NDI website:

http://cfapp2.undp.org/gef_dialogue/recommend/index.htm

Dialogue follow up

Countries may make optimal use of the opportunity offered by a Dialogue to discuss and agree upon an action plan that details the activities to be undertaken based on Dialogue results and recommendations. The discussion and agreement on a set of actions to be pursued could form part of the closing session, and be reflected in the Dialogue report distributed to participants. The action plan should ideally include tasks, responsibilities, and timeframes, as well as a means for monitoring progress.

Financing available for a National Dialogue

The GEF National Dialogue Initiative has funds to cover the following Dialogue costs:

- travel and accommodations of national government and NGO participants, in cases where participants must travel from other regions to the Dialogue site
- costs of international resource persons travel and accommodations from the GEFSec and the three IAs (these costs are administered directly by each of the respective agencies)
- in-country reproduction of Dialogue materials
- translation of Dialogue facilitation materials in special cases
- group lunches and coffee/tea breaks
- limited funds for an optional 1-day field visit
- Dialogue venue
- simultaneous interpretation if required

Costs not covered by GEF NDI

Please note that the GEF NDI cannot cover the cost of fees of any kind for Dialogue organization or participation such as honorariums, stipends, DSAs, support costs, overhead, etc. Such costs are considered an in-kind contribution of the host Government toward their GEF National Dialogue.

Procedures for accessing Dialogue funds

After an initial consultation with the GEF NDI, the GEF Operational Focal Point will submit a Dialogue budget for consideration. Once the Dialogue budget has been agreed, arrangements will be made to disburse the funds through the UNDP Country Office according to UNDP administrative rules and regulations.

Lessons Learned: Factors that have contributed to the success of past Dialogues

- Close cooperation between GEF OFP/host government and UNDP CO or other local GEF agency offices in all aspects of planning, organization, and management of Dialogue
- Government involvement and participation at high levels
- Substantive interest and participation by Resident Coordinator of the UN system, World Bank country director, and UNEP Regional Office (when applicable)
- GEF OFP has been able to convey what s/he expects from the Dialogue to both organizers and participants
- Dialogue materials and agenda ready well in advance
- Government and other national stakeholders prepare background papers and substantive and complementary presentations on key agenda items
- Resource persons are available to share expertise on GEF focal areas and strategic objectives
- Broad range of participation that ensures both vertical engagement (i.e., from top decision-makers to local community-based organizations) and horizontal engagement of stakeholders (i.e., involving a broad range of sectors, areas of expertise, and interest groups), and with the appropriate representatives designated by each invited agency

GEF National Dialogue Initiative contact information

For more information on the GEF National Dialogue Initiative, please visit the website at <http://www.undp.org/gef/dialogue>, or contact the GEF National Dialogue and Country Support Program in New York:

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Annex 1: Examples of National Dialogue objectives and agendas

Cuba	Jordan	FYR Macedonia	Vietnam
Objectives			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance knowledge of GEF policies, procedures, and strategic priorities • Share lessons learned in the implementation of GEF projects in Cuba and strengthen coordination of GEF themes at national level • Forge greater links between GEF activities and national development plans, coordination and synergies between GEF focal areas and matters related to environmental Conventions <p>* OFP Ministry (CITMA) prepared background documents for use in Dialogue on biodiversity and climate change that addressed GEF strategic objectives and national concerns and priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting in-depth understanding of the GEF's strategic directions, policies and procedures • Strengthening country coordination and ownership in GEF operations and sharing lessons learned from project implementation • Achieving greater mainstreaming of GEF activities into national planning frameworks and coordination and synergies amongst the GEF focal areas and Convention issues at the national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase understanding of GEF strategic priorities and policies • Share lessons learned from project implementation • Initiate a dialogue among all stakeholders – national representatives, GEF representatives, Implementing Agencies – that will facilitate links between the GEF and national priorities and the ongoing process in the country, especially decentralization and EU accession, and will strengthen the country coordination and ownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness of the GEF • Sharing experience and lessons learnt in developing, advocating and implementing GEF funded projects • Getting comments on national strategic priorities in GEF 4 • Taking stock of existing national GEF strategy (2000) and discussing revised national strategy for GEF 4 <p>* Background study provided on Vietnam's opportunities and threats in each GEF focal area, as well as the potential effects of the RAF</p>
Agenda			
Day 1 – Morning Opening session			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-Minister, Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (CITMA) • Vice-Minister, Ministry of Foreign Investment and Economic Cooperation (MINVEC) • Resident Coordinator, United Nations, Cuba • Team Leader, Corporate Affairs, GEF Secretariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEF Secretariat • Resident Representative, UNDP, Jordan • Secretary General, Ministry of Environment • Secretary General, Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minister of Environment and Physical Planning • UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative • GEF Secretariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Vice Minister, MONRE, Chair of GEF Vietnam Steering Committee • GEF Secretariat • UN Resident Coordinator • World Bank Country Director
Plenary presentations			
Overview of the GEF NDI and Dialogue	Overview of the GEF	Overview of the workshop (NDI)	Overview of Dialogue objectives and

<p>objectives and agenda (NDI)</p> <p>Information session on the GEF: Strategic priorities, policies, and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on the GEF (UNDP/GEF) • Operational Programs and Strategic Priorities in GEF 4 (UNEP/GEF) • Resource Allocation Framework (GEFSec) <p>Questions and Answers</p>	<p>(WB/GEF, UNEP/GEF, GEFSec)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focal areas and links to international conventions • Project eligibility criteria • GEF Operational Programmes • GEF Strategic Priorities • Project cycle (including monitoring and evaluation) • Resource Allocation Framework 2006 – 2009 <p>Open discussion on presentations</p>	<p>Summary of the GEF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEF Operational Programs and Strategic Priorities (UNEP/GEF) • Resource Allocation Framework 2006 – 2009 (GEFSec) <p>Questions and Answers</p>	<p>agenda (Vice Chair of GEF Vietnam SC)</p> <p>General Introduction on GEF (UNDP/GEF)</p> <p>Strategic priorities in GEF 4 (UNEP/GEF)</p> <p>Resource Allocation Framework (GEFSec)</p> <p>Stocktaking of Vietnam's progress in GEF strategic portfolio achievements Vietnam's national strategic priorities in GEF 4 (GEF Vietnam Coordinator and OFP)</p>
Day 1 – Afternoon			
Plenary presentations and discussion		Working groups and plenary discussion	
<p>Information session on national environmental priorities and experiences of GEF project implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priorities of the National Environmental Strategy of Cuba (CITMA) • Cuba's international cooperation policies (MINVEC) • Implementation of GEF projects by UN agencies in Cuba and their contribution to the Country Program/UNDAF (UN RC) • Panel of Implementing and Executing Agencies on priorities of their national cooperation programs with Cuba and corporate strategic directions for work with GEF (FAO, UNIDO, UNDP, UNEP) <p>Questions and Answers</p>	<p>Jordan's National Environment Action Plan and Agenda 21 (Ministry of Environment)</p> <p>National priorities in biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, prevention of land degradation, protection of international waters, and elimination of persistent organic pollutants (Ministry of Environment)</p> <p>GEF funded projects in Jordan (Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation)</p> <p>Open discussion on presentations</p> <p>Open discussion on linking Jordan's national strategies to GEF funded projects</p> <p>Wrap up – Day 1</p>	<p>National Level Coordination (NDI)</p> <p>Development and incremental costs in GEF-financed projects (UNDP/GEF)</p> <p>Questions and Answers</p>	<p>Introduction to working groups (NDI and GEF Vietnam)</p> <p>Working groups on national strategic priorities in GEF 4 by focal area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity • Climate change • POPs, international waters, land degradation <p>Presentations of working groups to plenary</p> <p>Summary of outcomes of working group sessions (Vice Chair of GEF Vietnam SC)</p>
Day 2 – Morning			
Plenary presentations and discussion			

<p>Second information session on national environmental priorities and experiences of GEF project implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuba's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (CITMA) • Cuba faces climate change: Studies of vulnerability and adaptation and the process of the Second National Communication (CITMA) • Support for the implementation of the National Program to Combat Desertification and Drought (CIGEA/CITMA) • Integrated management of bays, coastal zones, and watersheds in Cuba (MITRANS/CIMAB) • National Implementation Plan for the management of POPs in Cuba (CIGEA/CITMA) • SGP implementation experiences in Cuba (SGP) <p>Questions and Answers</p>	<p>Integration of GEF projects into Sustainable Development, MDGs and National Development Plan (Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation)</p> <p>Presentation: GEF Country Level Coordination (UNDP/GEF)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of GEF focal points • Role of civil society • National coordination mechanisms <p>Open discussion on integration of GEF projects and GEF country coordination in Jordan</p> <p>Presentation: GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) in Jordan (SGP and project representatives)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies of GEF/SGP projects in Jordan • Launching of "101 and beyond ... SGP initiatives in Jordan" guidebook <p>Open discussion on GEF SGP in Jordan</p>	<p>GEF projects in Macedonia - experiences and lessons learnt (GEF project representatives)</p> <p>Overview of Macedonia's national environmental and development priorities, with emphasis on the EU accession and decentralization (Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Sector on European Integration)</p> <p>How to involve private sector into GEF funded programmes and projects (WB/GEF)</p> <p>Co-funding - how to involve other donors active in the country into GEF funded programmes and projects (donors coordination group on environment, GEF IAs)</p> <p>Questions and Answers</p>	<p>Procedures to review and approve project proposals for GEF funding (WB/GEF)</p> <p>Procedures to review and endorse project proposals for GEF funding in Vietnam (GEF Vietnam Coordinator and OFP)</p> <p>Overview of GEF national coordination issues (NDI)</p> <p>Overview of lessons learned from GEF funded projects in Vietnam (Consultant)</p>
Day 2 - Afternoon			
Working Groups	Plenary presentations and discussion		
<p>Presentation of working group methodology in plenary (NDI and UNDP CO)</p> <p>Working group sessions: National priorities in GEF 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity • Climate change (adaptation and mitigation) • POPs, international waters, land degradation 	<p>Presentations and open discussion: Co-funding - how to involve other donors active in the country with GEF co-financed programmes and projects (WB/GEF)</p> <p>Case studies of GEF projects in Jordan (GEF project representatives)</p> <p>Launching of "NAP to Combat Desertification" (Ministry of Environment)</p> <p>Open discussion on case studies in Jordan</p> <p>Summary, next steps and closing statements (GEF team, Ministries of Environment and Planning and</p>	<p>Discussion on links between GEF and national priorities and processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of convergence • Potential Synergies <p>Wrap up session and the way forward (chaired by GEF OFP)</p>	<p>Achievements and lessons learned from 3 projects (UNDP/GEF, WB/GEF, UNEP/GEF) in Vietnam</p> <p>Achievements and lessons learned from SGP in Vietnam</p> <p>Recommendations from IAs for GEF projects</p> <p>Conclusions and wrap up (Vice Chair of GEF Vietnam SC)</p>

	International Cooperation)		
Day 3			
Continuation of working group sessions Presentation of working group results in plenary: Cuba's Strategy in GEF 4 (working group rapporteurs) Closing session (conducted by OFP): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation and debate on Cuba's Strategy in GEF 4 • Conclusions 	Field visit to GEF and SGP projects Presentation on site and open discussion	Field trip to 2 GEF project sites	Field trip to GEF MSP and SGP project sites Introductions to projects
Dialogue report, recommendations, and other products			
Dialogue proceedings compiled on CD-ROM Summary report	Dialogue proceedings compiled in report (available as pdf)	Synthetic report on background, GEF project implementation experiences and lessons learned, national priorities by focal area, recommendations (4 pages) Work program for the support of the GEF Operational Focal Point and national coordination activities in Macedonia	Dialogue proceedings and background materials compiled on flash drives that were distributed to participants Revised "National GEF Action Plan" (reflecting Dialogue conclusions and recommendations)