



**GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY**  
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

# PARTNERSHIP IN PRACTICE: Engagement with Indigenous Peoples



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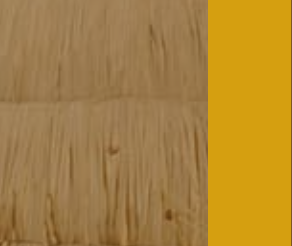
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# Foreword





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CEO and Chairperson  
Global Environment Facility

Indigenous peoples, and their traditional knowledge and sustainable resource management practices, have contributed effectively to safeguarding our global environment. Tragically, and despite their contributions to the global environment and to human culture, indigenous societies are disappearing at an unprecedented rate. Indigenous peoples worldwide continue to be vulnerable and suffer from devastating poverty, disease and discrimination.<sup>1</sup>

The adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) highlights the important need to secure a sustainable future for indigenous peoples globally. A rapidly developing globalized economy is threatening the lands and resources many indigenous peoples rely upon for their cultural, spiritual and physical survival. Indigenous peoples are also highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, given that they often reside in environmentally sensitive areas.<sup>2</sup>

Indigenous peoples are not only victims of a deteriorating global environment: they are also a source of effective solutions. Their knowledge systems are critical to helping us cope with changing environmental patterns and conditions. The remarkable spatial convergence between the globally important biodiversity sites and indigenous lands, territories and resources also presents an enormous opportunity for both conserving biodiversity and supporting indigenous peoples' livelihoods.

This publication updates a document on indigenous peoples prepared by the GEF Secretariat in 2008. In recent years, the GEF has enhanced its partnership with indigenous peoples. For example, it has developed the *GEF Policy on Agency Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards* (which includes a safeguard policy on indigenous peoples), the *Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples*, and the establishment of the GEF Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group. Moreover, GEF projects involving indigenous peoples have more than doubled during the past six years to more than 220.

The GEF will continue to fulfill its mandate to conserve the global environment through a multi-stakeholder approach, while supporting provisions of the UNDRIP. We remain open to feedback and guidance from our partners. And we invite indigenous groups and community organizations to help the GEF continue to evolve as an effective mechanism for championing the global commons.

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1 United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, *State of the World's Indigenous People*, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, 2009.  
2 Macchi, M. IUCN Issues Paper, *Indigenous and Traditional Peoples and Climate Change*, 2008.





# Indigenous Peoples: GEF Policies and Participation

## Why We Work with Indigenous Peoples

Approximately 370 million indigenous peoples live in over 90 countries around the world.<sup>3</sup> Many of these peoples have survived due to their relative isolation, in territories that are increasingly recognized as physically and biologically outstanding on a global scale.

In fact, a significant fraction of the world's priority areas—based on biodiversity and ecosystem importance—overlap with indigenous peoples' lands, territories and resources.<sup>4</sup> For example, indigenous peoples in parts of North and South America, central Africa, Russia and Southeast Asia inhabit the world's remaining large boreal forests and rain forests. These areas play a critical role in the carbon cycle and also serve as reservoirs of irreplaceable biodiversity and ecosystem services. This remarkable convergence presents both an enormous opportunity, as well as a challenge for conservation efforts.

Indigenous peoples are distinct communities where the land and resources upon which they depend are inextricably linked to their identities and cultures. Loss or destruction of indigenous peoples' lands and resources due to natural or developmental changes can bring about economic impoverishment, loss of identity and threatened cultural survival. The GEF is dedicated

to ensuring that its operations fully respect the dignity, human rights, economies, cultures and traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and their members.<sup>5</sup>

Further, the GEF sees an enormous opportunity given that indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge and ecosystem management practices are recognized as particularly relevant for natural resources management, sustainable development and climate adaptation.

## Guidance of Related Multilateral Environmental Agreements

International treaties and obligations recognize the importance of protecting indigenous peoples and the lands and resources upon which they depend. The CBD and the UNFCCC, among others, provide important guidance to the GEF on these issues, as well as on indigenous knowledge valuable for conservation efforts.

The CBD, for example, calls to respect, preserve, and maintain traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources.<sup>6</sup> Further, at the 11th Conference of the Parties, the CBD invited the GEF to provide support to indigenous and local communities for training, capacity building, and other activities related to ecologically or biologically significant marine areas. The CBD also invited the GEF to provide support for indicators on traditional knowledge and customary

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3 United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, *State of the World's Indigenous People*, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, 2009.

4 Some estimates indicate that traditional indigenous territories may contain up to 80% of the earth's biodiversity. See GEF project document on *Assessment and Recommendations on Improving Access of Indigenous Peoples to Conservation Funding*, 2007.

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5 GEF/C.41/10/Rev.1

6 CBD Article 8(j), Strategic Plan on Biodiversity 2011-2020, and Aichi Target 18.

sustainable use, and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing.<sup>7</sup>

The UNFCCC has provided guidance related to the participation of Indigenous Peoples and inclusion of indigenous knowledge in the preparation of National Adaptation Plans (NAP), which the GEF supports through the LDCF and SCCF. Specifically, the UNFCCC stipulates the NAP process should be participatory and inclusive of indigenous peoples – from design and implementation to monitoring and evaluation. It also stipulates that a variety of knowledge sources, including indigenous knowledge<sup>8</sup>, should guide the NAP process.

## GEF Policy and Strategy Related to Indigenous Peoples

Recognizing the important role they play as key partners and stakeholders, the GEF helps ensure that indigenous peoples are incorporated into all relevant aspects of its work. The GEF was one of the first international financial institutions to develop an independent policy supporting the effective involvement of civil society, including provisions for indigenous peoples and local communities. This policy, entitled *Public Involvement in GEF-financed Projects*,<sup>9</sup> provides the basis for participation of indigenous peoples in all aspects of the GEF's work, including the design, implementation and evaluation of GEF-financed projects.

More recently, the GEF Council adopted the *GEF Policy on Agency Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards*<sup>10</sup> that all GEF Partner Agencies are expected to meet. One of the eight core criteria stipulates minimum standards for GEF Partner Agencies wishing to implement GEF projects involving indigenous peoples. These minimum standards include provisions for use of cultural resources or traditional knowledge, use of envi-

ronmental and social impact assessments, consultations, access, and land tenure, among others.

Further, the GEF's *Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples*<sup>11</sup> was adopted in 2011. This paper consolidates and reaffirms existing GEF principles related to indigenous peoples. In addition, it elaborates new guidelines on applying these policies to GEF Partner Agencies and other stakeholders interested in implementing relevant projects. Specifically, it addresses project planning, participation, governance, benefit sharing, traditional knowledge, gender, resettlement and accountability, and grievance systems related to indigenous peoples. It also clarified mechanisms and practices in support of the effective implementation of the *GEF Principles and Guidelines*. Of note, as a result, the GEF Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (IPAG) was established and tasked with helping the GEF Secretariat's Indigenous Peoples Focal Point to put the policy in action. With indigenous people representatives self-selected from across the globe, the IPAG began its work in 2013 and regularly meets to provide guidance to the GEF.

Guidance from the Conventions and GEF policies are incorporated into the GEF's Focal Area Strategies. The GEF-6 Biodiversity Focal Area Strategy identifies indigenous peoples as key partners in achieving its strategic objectives. The strategy commits to continue promoting the participation and capacity building of indigenous peoples in the design, implementation, and management of protected area projects through established frameworks such as Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) and co-management regimes. It also establishes project support for capacity building among indigenous peoples to negotiate access to genetic resources and benefit sharing, as well as support for measures that promote the development and implementation of access and benefit-sharing agreements.<sup>12</sup>

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7 COP11 Decision xi/5. Convention on Biological Diversity.

8 CO17 Decision 5/CP.17 and Decision 12/CP.18, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

9 GEF/C.7/6 and C.6/Inf.5, *Draft Outline of Policy Paper on Public Involvement in GEF-Financed Projects*.

10 GEF/C.41/10/Rev.1.

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11 GEF/C.42/Inf.03/Rev.1.

12 These measures include agreements that recognize the core ABS principles of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) and Mutually Agreed Terms (MAT). See *Compilation of GEF-6 Focal Area Strategies*, 2014.

The GEF-6 Sustainable Forest Management Strategy (SFM) also supports a multi-focal area approach. Among other priorities, it emphasizes forest management projects that enhance sustainable livelihoods for indigenous and local communities. It also applies a multi-stakeholder approach, including the involvement of indigenous peoples.<sup>13</sup> In addition, it identifies engagement of indigenous peoples as key to identifying policy and economic incentives, tools and methodologies to address the drivers of deforestation. With advice from the IPAG, other focal areas have also made efforts to incorporate indigenous peoples into relevant objectives of GEF-6 Focal Area Strategies.<sup>14</sup>

## Participation of Indigenous Peoples at the GEF

Indigenous peoples are active participants in GEF processes. Their involvement continues to grow and expand as illustrated in the list below:

- Accessing GEF funds for specific projects, including in a leadership role
- Participation and involvement in GEF projects, including as beneficiaries
- Involvement in policy processes through the GEF Assembly and Council
- Serving on the GEF's Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (IPAG) to advise the GEF Secretariat's Indigenous Peoples Focal Point
- Participation and involvement in the broader civil society GEF coalitions, including the GEF NGO Network
- Involvement in the CBD, UNFCCC and other relevant policy processes, to help guide the GEF in its role as the financial mechanism of several multilateral conventions.

Of note, indigenous peoples were very active during the development of the *GEF Policy on Agency Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards* and the *GEF Principles and Guidelines for*

*Engagement with Indigenous Peoples*. For the latter, a special task force, comprised of indigenous peoples and experts, was assembled to provide detailed feedback to the GEF at all stages of the *Principles and Guidelines* development. As a result of their feedback, an Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (IPAG) now provides continued guidance to the GEF Secretariat.

The GEF Secretariat, with advise and support from IPAG members, is reviewing and enhancing GEF's monitoring systems to track results and progress, knowledge and capacity development, and support projects related to indigenous issues. The GEF Secretariat is also engaged in outreach program, which raises awareness about the work of the GEF and its engagement with indigenous peoples, and solicits feedback and guidance from them. Several dialogues and presentations have occurred at CBD meetings and the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), and others are expected in the coming year.

In addition to these channels, indigenous peoples have been part of regular dialogues between the GEF at the GEF Council, CSO Consultation Meetings, side events/ meetings at the Conference of Parties of the Conventions and other major environmental policy fora.

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13 See *Compilation of GEF-6 Focal Area Strategies*, 2014.

14 See *Compilation of GEF-6 Focal Area Strategies*, 2014.







# GEF Projects Involving Indigenous Peoples

The GEF has a long history of collaborating with indigenous peoples in its operations and projects dating to its inception in 1991. The GEF Publication, *The A to Z of the GEF: A Guide to the Global Environment Facility for Civil Society Organizations*<sup>15</sup>, provides guidance for indigenous peoples and other CSOs on how to access GEF funding, including project development and approval through the full- and medium-sized project windows. It also provides step-by-step guidance for access to small grants through the GEF Small Grants Program.

## GEF Full and Medium-sized projects

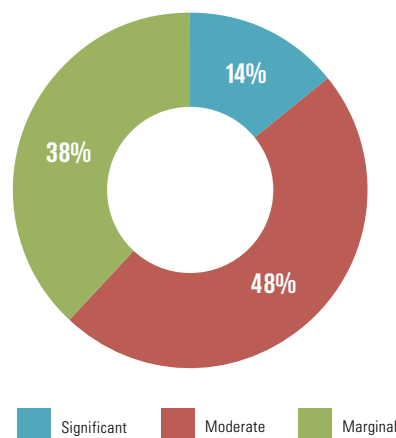
### Number of projects and degree of involvement

As of April 2014, the GEF had supported over 220 full- and medium-sized projects that involved indigenous peoples. Among them, about 70% were full-sized projects, while remaining were medium-sized projects.<sup>16</sup> Their involvement ranges from being an executing or implementing agency for projects to receiving benefits at the outcome level such as payments for ecosystem services.

As Figure 1 illustrates, of more than 220 projects, 31 projects (14%) demonstrated significant involvement of indigenous peoples (projects executed or imple-

mented by indigenous organizations).<sup>17</sup> Among those, 27 projects (87%) were biodiversity focal area projects. In addition, a large share (61%) of these projects were from the Latin America and Caribbean region. This reflects the historical engagement of Latin American indigenous peoples in biodiversity conservation related activities.

**FIGURE 1 DEGREE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES INVOLVEMENT IN GEF PROJECTS**



15 GEF, *The A to Z of the GEF: A Guide to the Global Environment Facility for Civil Society Organizations*, 2011.

16 Since 2013, projects with GEF grant of US\$2 million are categorized as medium-sized projects. Until then, medium-sized projects were up to US\$1 million.

17 Projects have been qualitatively categorized in the following three groups for analysis:

1. Significant involvement: Projects designed exclusively to benefit indigenous peoples or projects where the executing and/or implementing agency was an indigenous organization.
2. Moderate involvement: Projects that had distinct components and/or sub-projects benefiting and targeting indigenous peoples.
3. Limited involvement: Projects where indigenous peoples participated in a few project activities.



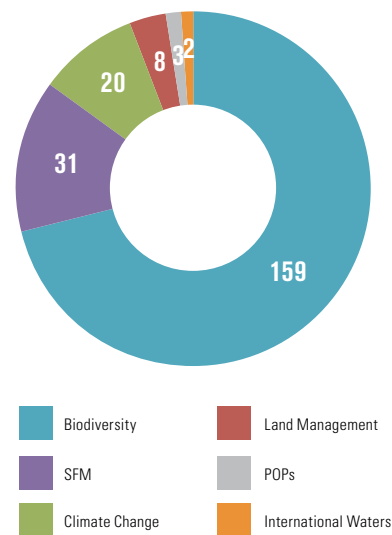


### Types of projects

Biodiversity continues to dominate among focal areas for projects with indigenous peoples (71%, or 159 projects). However, in recent years, indigenous peoples have been increasingly included in the other focal areas, such as climate change and sustainable forest management (see figure 2).

GEF projects involving indigenous peoples have ranged from co-management or direct participation in protected areas and buffer zones management, and mainstreaming biodiversity in the production landscape (including use of traditional knowledge for natural resources management) to support for policy influence and capacity building. More recently, indigenous peoples have been involved in GEF- projects related to development of access and benefit-sharing frameworks, enhanced regional cooperation for management of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and coping with the impacts of climate change through food security and pastoral management.

**FIGURE 2 DISTRIBUTION OF GEF PROJECTS BY FOCAL AREA**

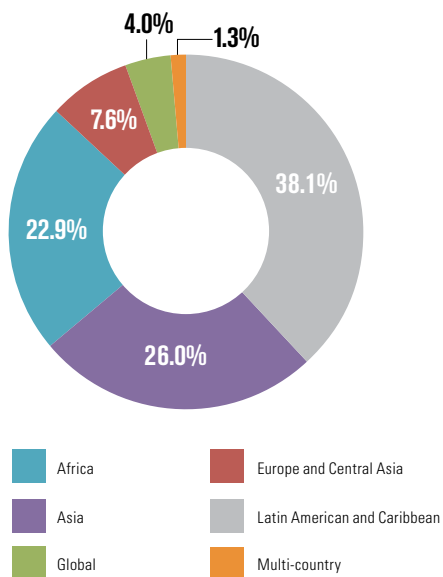




### Regional distribution

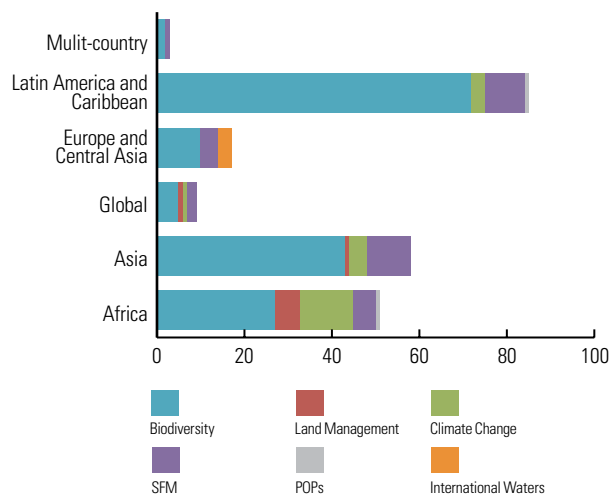
Indigenous peoples' involvement in GEF projects continues to be focused in Latin America and the Caribbean (39%); in recent years, however, there has been greater regional diversity with increasing number of projects in Asia and Africa regions (see figure 3).

### FIGURE 3 REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF GEF PROJECTS INVOLVING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



Comparing the regional distribution of projects across all the focal areas illustrates that each region has a broad representation of projects involving indigenous peoples (see figure 4).

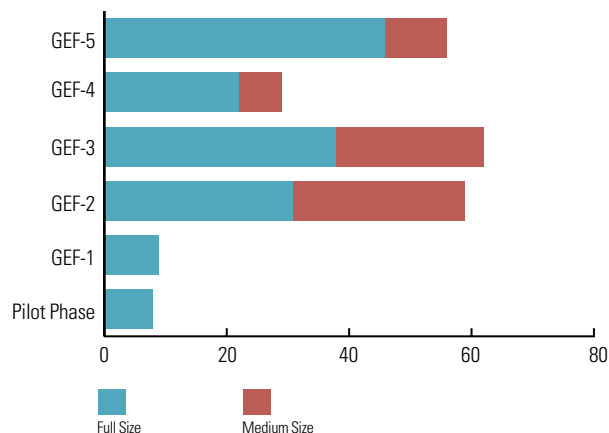
### FIGURE 4 REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF BY FOCAL AREA



### Trends by GEF replenishment cycle

The GEF is continually working to expand projects that integrate indigenous peoples. With the exception of GEF-4, the number of GEF projects that include indigenous peoples has been steadily increasing in each replenishment cycle (see figure 5). The GEF Secretariat is assessing to determine why participation of indigenous peoples dropped during GEF-4.

### FIGURE 5 TRENDS IN PROJECTS INVOLVING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, BY GEF REPLENISHMENT CYCLE



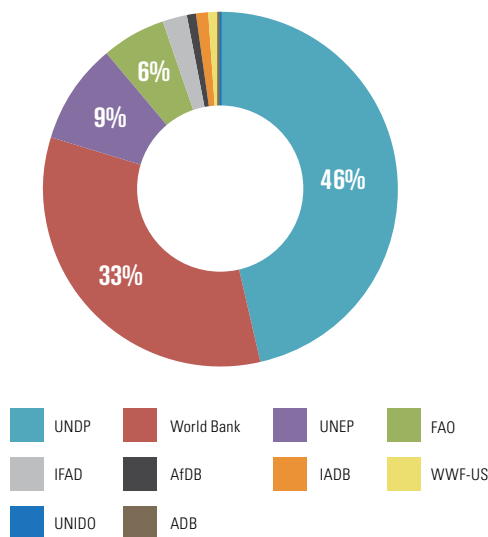




### Distribution of GEF projects by Agencies

UNDP and the World Bank implemented most of the GEF projects related to indigenous peoples (46% and 33%, respectively). Compared to prior GEF analyses, however, the number of GEF Project Agencies incorporating indigenous peoples into their projects has gone up significantly. Most GEF Project Agencies have projects that involve indigenous peoples (see figure 6).

**FIGURE 6 DISTRIBUTION OF PROJECTS INVOLVING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, BY GEF AGENCY**



### GEF Small Grants Program

In addition to its full- and medium-sized projects, the GEF Small Grants Program (SGP) has benefited and involved many indigenous peoples across the world. The SGP links global, national and local issues through a transparent, participatory and country-driven approach to project planning, design and implementation. Since 1992, the SGP has awarded more than 16,000 grants, totaling more than \$650 million in 137 countries. Approximately 15% of these projects were directed toward indigenous peoples.

The SGP has provided grants of up to \$50,000 – averaging \$20,000 to \$35,000 – directly to indigenous peoples and local communities. In the process, it has made a significant difference in their livelihoods and environments. Strategic features include support of activities that reconcile sustainable livelihoods with GEF global priorities; the growing ownership by communities and local CSOs as a result of increased capacities and the experiences gained; and the active engagement of diverse stakeholders working on global environmental issues at the local level.



## Case study of Small Grants Program

### Community Engagement in REDD+: The U'yool'ché A.C. Project

Implementing Organization:	U'yool'ché A.C. – Ejido Felipe Carrillo Puerto
Location:	Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico
GEF SGP Contribution:	Total US\$ 61,731 (2008 and 2011)
Co-financing:	Total US\$ 93,977

#### Background

The U'yool'ché A.C. project began in 2006 with the interest of indigenous communities to develop carbon sequestration techniques in the Mayan Zone. In Mexico, 80% of forests are owned by ejidos and communities. The Sian Ka'an—Calakmul Corridor, the project site, is a vast forested area that links two biosphere reserves of great importance in terms of biodiversity, and the sustainability of its local communities.

The project is piloting the participation of local and indigenous communities to conserve the forest and its associated biodiversity that can serve as an example for REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation). The project assumes that identifying the needs and aspirations of local communities and equipping them with the necessary tools is a key means by which to empower them in the fight against climate change.

#### Achievements and lessons learned

With the support from the project, a community conservation area of 1,230 hectares was declared, which consists of semi-evergreen forest. This important outcome was enabled through enhanced capacities of indigenous peoples, including youth and women, to understand climate change, forest carbon monitoring and other sustainable management issues and methodologies. The project created more than 20 temporary jobs and improved access to medicines. U'yool'ché A.C., the local NGO, has been leading the scaling-up process in 12 other communities in the region and transmitting capabilities from one community to another.

A number of key findings can inform future projects and improve upon this pilot:

- Strong involvement of the landowners is key to ensure sustainability of the project. Activities such as community-based research and participatory workshops allow for good ownership by community members.
- The transmission of knowledge and capacities from community to community can lay the foundation for projects in the future.
- The support from local NGOs and scientific institutions is fundamental to achieving project objectives by supporting research activities and generating alternative financial management activities.





# Highlights of Projects

The five GEF projects summarized in this section exemplify best practice in the engagement of indigenous peoples in GEF projects, ensuring their priorities and aspirations are taken into account within the overall project design and results framework.

## A. Brazil: Sustainable Forest Management: Catalyzing the Contribution of Indigenous Lands to the Conservation of Brazil’s Forest Ecosystem

GEF Agency:	UNDP
Executing Agency:	Ministry of Environment (MMA), Brazilian Foundation for Indigenous Affairs (FUNAI), and Indigenous Organizations
GEF Grant:	US\$ 6,100,000
Co-financing:	US\$ 31,700,000
GEF Project Endorsement:	2009

### Background

Brazil is a country with significant biodiversity. Its 611 indigenous lands have been identified as a highly strategic opportunity for achieving effective conservation of the country’s forests, while also helping indigenous peoples continue their traditional way of life.

Covering 105.6 million hectares (12% of national territory), some of these indigenous lands cover areas identified as highly important to biodiversity. The different cultural practices developed by indigenous peoples over centuries play an important role in promoting conservation and sustainable use of the resources within their lands. Indigenous land and practices, however, are increasingly under threat due to a combination of externally and internally driven pressures.

The goal of this project is to support the effective conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity by indigenous peoples of indigenous lands. The project is catalyzing the consolidation of indigenous lands as





essential protected areas for the conservation of biodiversity in Brazilian forest ecosystems.

**Achievements and lessons learned**

The project has created an enabling environment to recognize the role of indigenous lands in the conservation of biodiversity; carbon sequestration and stocks; sustainable livelihoods; and, foremost, for empowering indigenous peoples to discuss their future with government institutions. In this way, it has helped structure a collaborative relationship between indigenous organizations and the Brazilian government.

The Policy for Environmental and Territorial Management of Indigenous Lands was signed in June 2012 and its development involved over 1,200 indigenous peoples from 186 ethnic groups. The policy provides a framework for partnership between the government and indigenous peoples in the management of indigenous lands.

The early phase of the project also succeeded in building government capacity in indigenous lands development and management. It internalized the concept of management of indigenous lands, including recognition of indigenous peoples’ contributions to biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services. The project also firmly established the project governance structure within the relevant government entity, FUNAI, including a robust system for FPIC based on its policy.

One important lesson learned from the project is to manage the expectations of various stakeholders to maintain its focus. This can be accomplished during the project preparation phase through strong communication and agreement of the project scope and limitations. Another lesson learned is the value of diverse participation at the decision-making level. A project steering committee was established with equal representation of government personnel and indigenous peoples. The project has found that inclusive participation is important for open communication and transparency. Finally, securing appropriate FPIC through a participatory process ensures the project starts off in a legitimate manner.

**B. Global: Enabling Sustainable Dryland Management through Mobile Pastoral Custodianship (World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism—WISP)**

GEF Agency:	UNDP
Executing Agency:	Dryland Development Center of UNDP
GEF Grant:	US\$ 950,000
Co-financing:	US\$ 1,875,000
GEF Project Endorsement:	2005

**Background**

Pastoralism is among the most widespread land-use systems in the world’s drylands. Despite its role as a significant production system, pastoralism is poorly understood and often mislabeled as an environmentally destructive and economically unsustainable agricultural system. This misunderstanding has led to policy and systemic barriers to the integration of pastoralism into mainstream agricultural and economic production systems.

This global project, the World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism (WISP), was developed to address these challenges. It aimed to generate knowledge and small partnerships for advancing Mobile Pastoral Custodianship as a key mechanism for enabling sustainable drylands management. The overall goal was to enhance the enabling environment for sustainable rangeland management, improve pastoral livelihoods and empower pastoralists.

**Achievements and lessons learned**

The project has delivered credible results by creating knowledge, influencing policies and strengthening networks and partnerships for advocacy on behalf of pastoralism as a production system and pastoral livelihoods. It has helped empower pastoralists and strengthened pastoral civil society and global networking through its unique partnership approach.

WISP targeted the development of a strong evidence-based approach and capacity building. This approach has enabled stakeholders to use credible arguments, and engage effectively in persuasive dialogue. Pastoralists



ralists have increased respect and feel that this project has increased awareness and strengthened support towards mobile indigenous peoples and sustainable drylands management.

A wide array of knowledge products were developed through the project, many in multiple languages enabling the easy use of pro-pastoralism arguments by stakeholders. While raising funds for translation continues to be a challenge, the initiative has proved valuable in bridging the gap between pastoral communities, and scientific and NGO communities. Knowledge products from this project include pastoralist women's rights and empowerment; pastoral organization to defend land rights; indigenous knowledge of rangeland monitoring indicators; and climate change and adaptation in the African livestock sector. A pastoralism toolkit to help support implementation was also developed.

### C. Arctic: Russia Federation: Support to the National Program of Action for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment

GEF Agency:	UNEP
Executing Agency:	Ministry of Economic Development-ACOPS
GEF Grant:	US\$ 6,191,000;
Co-financing:	US\$ 12,484,000
GEF Project Endorsement:	2003

#### Background

The project aimed to develop and establish a sustainable framework to reduce environmental degradation of the Russian Arctic from land-based activities at a system-level. This included the development and implementation of a nationally approved Strategic Action Program (SAP).

Projects in three model regions aimed to demonstrate the potential for creating stable co-management practices. One project, COMAN, focused on balancing the interests of business/industries and indigenous peoples in resolving economic and environmental concerns, while preserving their traditional lifestyle and habitat. COMAN was carried out by the Batani International Development Fund for Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East with the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON).

These demonstration projects were aimed to create the conditions for environmental co-management by federal and local government bodies, extracting companies and the indigenous peoples of the North at locations of traditional habitat and economic activity.

#### Achievements and lessons learned

The project achieved its goals by successfully completing the Strategic Action Program and updating the Diagnostic Analysis of environmental problems of the Russian Arctic. It completed a number of activities specifically related to indigenous peoples, including:





1. Introductory seminar aimed at a common understanding of objectives and expected results by all interested parties, including indigenous peoples and industry.
2. Analysis of environmental co-management practices along with the development of recommendations on how to improve these practices in pre-designated regions. This analysis included training indigenous peoples to register and use traditional knowledge for mapping and conducting ecological monitoring.
3. Regional consultations to accommodate interests and coordinate actions of stakeholders participating in environmental co-management, including indigenous peoples. These consultations included the development of principles and methods for solving issues of co-management and ensuring balance and stability. The consultations also resulted in the adoption of a common process and initial work to develop formal institutional mechanisms to govern relations between indigenous peoples, state bodies and private business.
4. Regional roundtables to summarize results of the project and joint action plans for executive and local government bodies, companies and indigenous communities. These plans guide co-management by balancing interests of all parties and support the preservation of the traditional way of life and habitat of the indigenous peoples.

As a result of this demonstration project, the model of the ethno-ecological council was established. The ethno-ecological councils serve as a forum to identify and resolve potential conflicts between the indigenous population, companies, executive authorities, local government bodies and other interested parties.

The experiences and learning from this demonstration project were also later used to develop the federal law on "Protection of original habitat, traditional way of life and traditional nature use of the Russian Federation's small-numbered indigenous peoples."

## D. Community-based Adaptation Program (CBA)

GEF Agency:	UNDP
Executing Agency:	UNOPS
GEF Grant:	US\$ 4,525,140
Co-financing:	US\$ 4,525,140
GEF Endorsement:	2007

### Background

It is increasingly recognized that small communities are likely to be the most severely affected by climate change impacts and yet are least equipped to cope and adapt. This pilot project was designed to implement community-based projects that seek to enhance the resiliency of communities, and/or the ecosystems on which they rely, to climate change impacts and variability. Lessons learned can then be leveraged to replicate successful community practices, and integrate lessons learned into existing and new policies that promote increased community adaptive capacity. Indigenous peoples are identified as an important target group due to their unique vulnerabilities to climate change.

Ten participating countries (Bangladesh, Bolivia, Guatemala, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Samoa and Vietnam) have each developed a portfolio of 8-20 community-level adaptation projects.

For example, in Bolivia, where 56-70% of the population is estimated to be indigenous, a National CBA Coordinating Committee (NCA) was established to provide the vertical linkage between community-based activities and national-scale adaptation activities.

### Achievements and lessons learned

Most notably, the project has spread greater awareness about the effects of climate change and demonstrated the building of adaptive capacity at the community level. However, knowledge and understanding of climate change adaptation concepts and adaptive solutions in the face of climate change are still limited both among policy makers and indigenous peoples and local communities. The projects in Bolivia, Kazakhstan, Samoa and Niger are in advanced stages and have integrated policy makers at the national and local levels to a significant degree.

Many local NGOs and community-based organizations have limited technical and implementation capacity







for climate change adaptation projects. Therefore, capacity building and awareness-raising needs to be an integral part of actions delivered to indigenous peoples and local agents. This strategy requires continued effort to ensure sustainability of the project impacts through mainstreaming in relevant policies and planning.

A unique blend between volunteerism, communities and technical support to local actors presents an opportunity for grassroots organizations as well as communities to learn to advocate for and sustain livelihood options that can adapt to climate change. For this, it is important that the communities have access to its local resources, including natural, physical, human, social and financial assets.

### E. Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund

GEF Agency:	World Bank
Executing Agency:	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
GEF Grant:	Total US\$ 45 million
Co-financing:	Total US\$ 160 million
GEF Project Endorsement:	2007

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is designed to safeguard the world's biologically richest and most threatened regions, known as biodiversity hotspots. It is a joint initiative of Conservation International, the European Union, French Development Agency, the Global Environment Facility, the Govern-

ment of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the World Bank.

CEPF engages civil society, such as community groups, NGOs, indigenous peoples, academic institutions and private enterprises in biodiversity conservation. Since its creation in 2000, CEPF has provided more than \$163 million for 23 hotspots in more than 60 countries and territories to over 1,800 civil society partners, including indigenous peoples' organizations.

CEPF grants to indigenous peoples' organizations have gone toward development of income-generating activities and skills, capacity building, management plans for indigenous territories, land titling and preservation of traditional knowledge, among others.

### CEPF Case Study: Supporting the Kriol and Rama Indigenous Peoples of Nicaragua

Implementing Organization:	Universidad de las Regiones Autonomas de la Costa Caribe Nicaraguense
Location:	Rio San Juan Biosphere Reserve, Southern Nicaragua
CEPF Contribution:	3 Projects Total US\$ 431,537
Cofinancing:	Total US\$ 125,000

#### Background

CEPF has awarded a series of grants to assist the Rama and Kriol peoples in southeastern Nicaragua on land



titling, land management, and capacity building activities. The area contains the most intact forest within the Rio San Juan Biosphere Reserve, an important conservation corridor that is under threat from encroachment of landless poor.

With funding from CEPF and support from URACCAN (University of the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua), and other local partners, the Rama and Kriol set out to assess and fulfill the requirements for Nicaraguan land title declaration, which included conducting a census of their territory and a detailed study of their communities. The projects also focused on the development of skills to sustainably manage their land through participatory management planning processes and negotiate with government entities and other groups regarding land claims and encroachment concerns.

#### ***Achievements and Lessons Learned***

The projects supported securing legal title of their land in 2009, as well as the right to manage the area, 407,000 hectares for conservation and sustainable development. Park ranger stations were established and staffed with Rama, Kriol and mestizo (mixed European and indigenous heritage) guards trained to protect biodiversity and to combat poaching. The Rama and Kriol communities also developed land-use plans and sustainable alternatives to degradation.

One of the important lessons from these projects is the value of collaboration among various communities and

local organizations in the region. Open dialogue and the encouragement of inclusivity, active participation and direct communication among the various groups have helped to reduce and diffuse conflicts. In addition, the need for community wide environmental education and awareness campaigns has proved to be very important to project success. To ensure that all the communities understand the land titling provisions, local partners have been training community members about laws and policies, land management and conflict resolution.

As a result of these activities, the Rama and Kriol are building on their expanded capacity and taking the next steps toward being stewards of their land. They have identified sites for ecotourism, sustainable land management, and reforestation, and are also applying for funding and support on their own.







# Lessons Learned

Over the past two decades, the GEF has learned many lessons with respect to enhanced engagement with indigenous peoples. This learning has occurred through formal and informal evaluations, as well as via consultations with indigenous peoples and civil society more generally. The GEF will continue to learn and adjust actions based on these findings and incorporate them into relevant policies, processes and programs:

**Participation:** Ensuring timely and effective involvement of indigenous peoples is a critical factor in successful outcomes for all. Full and effective participation involves prior consultation, participation and consent processes that are acceptable to indigenous peoples and culturally appropriate. Where appropriate, securing FPIC through a participatory process can help ensure the project or program starts off in a legitimate manner. Self-selection by indigenous peoples for representation is another important factor to create legitimacy. The participation of women, youth and elders is also essential to ensure a broad range of interests. Finally, formal agreements between indigenous peoples and government authorities before project initiation, as well as the establishment of governing committees with equal representation of government and indigenous peoples, are also best practices.

**Knowledge development and management:** Support for knowledge development and management among indigenous peoples is critical. Capacity building can facilitate strong ownership among local partners, particularly indigenous peoples, and increases the sustainability of successful results. Knowledge development may include community-based research and participatory workshops, and should include technical and non-technical tools flexible enough for adaptation to different circumstances. Further, documentation in a culturally sensitive manner with acceptable norms is important to safeguard knowledge.

**Flexible institutional and governance arrangements:** Indigenous peoples often have institutional and governance arrangements unique from governments and other project decision-makers. Flexible project planning and design and support frameworks often facilitate the integration of indigenous peoples' decision-making processes. Allowing for unique arrangements where indigenous peoples and developers can jointly develop plans will, in the longer term, provide for more efficient and effective outcomes for all stakeholders. Further, to enhance sustainability, indigenous peoples' needs should be mainstreamed into municipal and national-level policies and planning. Building strong linkages between indigenous peoples and national and municipal authorities during project development can increase the chances of internalizing policies and results.

**Recognition rights:** Project outcomes are more successful and timely and lead to less conflict where indigenous peoples have access to their local resources, have been assigned their lands and have had traditional knowledge assets recognized. The development of an indigenous peoples' plan or baseline assessment can often help ensure that resource claims are addressed appropriately.

**Livelihood activities:** Projects that incorporated activities to improve livelihood of indigenous peoples often found to increase effectiveness and sustainability of the environmental outcomes. In particular, this includes productive activities that will allow indigenous communities to maintain their lifestyles and well-being, without compromising project investments and outcomes. Activities such as forest resource management and ecotourism, among others, have greatly improved projects' environmental and socio-economic outcomes.





# Future Direction

Engagement with indigenous peoples is crucial to the successful achievement of the GEF's mission. With increased understanding of linkages between indigenous peoples and global environmental outcomes, the GEF has adopted new standards and guidelines to help ensure appropriate and consistent engagement of indigenous peoples in GEF programs, projects and processes.

The GEF will continue to implement the standards set forth in the GEF's Policy on Agency Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards (Minimum Standard 4 related to indigenous peoples) and the Principles and Guidelines for Engagement with Indigenous Peoples.

Several actions are planned or underway to facilitate a more effective and systematic approach to incorporating indigenous peoples into GEF activities:

1. Support for the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group. This group has been instrumental in guiding the GEF Indigenous Peoples Focal Point on appropriate modalities to enhance indigenous peoples' engagement with the GEF.
2. Enhanced capacity development among GEF Secretariat and Agencies staff to support improved understanding of key indigenous peoples' issues and how to address them in project review and program development. This capacity building is particularly important as indigenous peoples are broadly integrated into Focal Area Strategies.
3. Explore further opportunities to support initiatives that are concerned and related to indigenous peoples through existing and new programs and

projects. This could include enhancing collaboration and communication with the GEF Small Grants Programme, Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, and other relevant projects.

4. Continued and enhanced representation and participation of indigenous peoples in relevant GEF policies, processes, programs and projects. This may include, but not limited to, involvement in the development of the guideline paper for the Public Involvement Policy, the Gender Action Plan, National Portfolio Formulation Exercises, SGP National Steering Committee and GEF project cycle activities.
5. Enhanced GEF results-based management and monitoring systems to track engagement of indigenous peoples in GEF projects and processes. This monitoring will also allow for improved reporting on the contribution and results of indigenous peoples' involvement in GEF projects.





## PHOTOGRAPHY

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## PRODUCTION CREDITS

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## ABOUT THE GEF

The Global Environment Facility, established in 1991 as an independent financial mechanism, provides resources to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for projects that benefit the global environment and promote sustainable livelihoods. The GEF is the financial mechanism for implementation of the United Nations (UN) Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), and the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

The GEF unites 183 countries—in partnership with international institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs), the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities—to address global environmental issues in the areas of biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer, and chemicals.

The GEF is the largest funder of projects to improve the global environment. In addition to the GEF Trust Fund, the GEF also administers the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) and the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Fund (NPIF). In addition, it provides interim secretariat services for the Adaptation Fund.

Since its inception, the GEF has invested over \$11.5 billion, supplemented by more than \$57 billion in co-financing, for 3,215 projects in more than 165 developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

Over 23 years, the GEF has established itself as a mechanism that operates in an effective and efficient manner, delivering solid outcomes with its resources. Through its network of Partner Agencies with a broad set of competencies, the GEF is able to have a balanced, transparent and global reach.

For more information, visit [www.thegef.org](http://www.thegef.org).



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