



**Independent Evaluation of the  
GEF Country Dialogue Workshops Programme**

**Evaluation Report**

**Submitted by**

Le Groupe-conseil Baastel Ltée  
C.P. 1874, Station 'B'  
Hull, Québec  
Canada. J8X 1W1  
(819) 595-1421  
[alafont@attglobal.net](mailto:alafont@attglobal.net)  
[baastel@baastel.ca](mailto:baastel@baastel.ca)

**October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2002**

## **Acronyms**

CBD.....	Convention on Biological Diversity
CDI.....	Capacity Development Initiative
CDW .....	Country Dialogue Workshop
DANIDA.....	Danish International Development Assistance
GEF.....	Global Environment Facility
GEFSEC.....	The GEF Secretariat
GHG .....	Greenhouse Gas
IA.....	Implementing Agency
M & E unit .....	Monitoring and Evaluation Unit
NCSA .....	National Capacity Self-assessment
NGO .....	Non-Governmental Organization
NSDS .....	National Sustainable Development Strategy
OFP.....	Operational Focal Point
OPS2 .....	Overall Performance Study
PDF .....	Project Development Facility
PIR.....	Project Implementation Review
POPs.....	Persistent Organic Pollutants
SC.....	Steering Committee
SGP.....	Small Grants Program
STAP .....	Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel
TOR.....	Terms of Reference
UNDP .....	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP.....	United Nations Environment Programme
WB.....	World Bank
WCU.....	Workshop Coordination Unit

*This report was prepared by le Groupe-conseil Baastel ltée. The following members of the review team contributed to data gathering, analysis and production of this report: Evan D. Green, Stéphane Sauvé-Boulet, and Alain Lafontaine, Team leader.*

## **Acknowledgements**

The review team would like to thank everyone who offered their time and experience throughout the evaluation process for their support. The CDW Steering Committee, the Workshop Coordination Unit, the GEF Secretariat and the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of GEF/UNDP provided the evaluation team with advice and basic information on key issues related to the context of this evaluation, and acted as a sounding board in the early stages of this evaluation process with respect to the development of crucial evaluation tools and approaches. The Workshop Coordination Unit also offered considerable support, assisting in the provision of coordinates for former workshop participants within NGOs, Government, Academic Institutions, and private sector organizations to be surveyed or interviewed as part of this process. We would also like to give a very special thank you note to all the GEF Secretariat and Implementing Agencies representatives, GEF Operational Focal Points, UNDP country office representatives, as well as various representatives from NGOs, government departments, academic institutions and private organizations, who contributed their time and knowledge to the crucial survey and for the interview process which were part of this evaluation. All of this allowed the evaluation team to gather crucial information on the CDW, which proved invaluable in ensuring a better quality report.

We hope that the analysis and the suggestions provided in this report will do justice to the quality of the hard work, support, and participation provided by everyone throughout this review process.

## Table of Contents

Acronyms.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
List of Figures and Tables.....	vi
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Methodology.....	1
2.1 Approach.....	1
2.2 Review coverage and evaluation matrix.....	1
2.3 Sources of Information and Data Collection Instruments Used.....	1
3. Project Design Issues.....	3
3.1 Quality of design for delivery of expected outputs.....	4
Adequacy of design in view of implementation reality encountered.....	4
3.2 Quality of design in view of the changing GEF context.....	5
3.3 Quality of design in view of country needs.....	6
3.3.1 Clear relationship between focus of workshops and expressed needs by the countries.....	6
3.3.2 Appropriateness of selection criteria for support to a workshop in view of needs expressed by countries.....	8
3.4 Relevance of design in view of OPS2 assessment.....	9
3.5 Quality of design in terms of risk/assumptions identified and mitigation strategy.....	10
4. Project Implementation Issues.....	12
4.1 Effectiveness of the Workshop Coordination Unit.....	13
4.2 Effectiveness of the UNDP Local/Country Offices.....	14
4.3 Effectiveness of role of OFPs.....	15
4.4 Effectiveness of the Steering Committee.....	17
4.5 Quality of Outputs.....	19
4.5.1 Overall level of satisfaction with workshops.....	19
4.5.2 Quality of material produced, logistics, presentations and the website.....	19
Quality of materials and logistics.....	20
Quality of presentations and modules.....	21
Quality of the website.....	23
4.6 Timeliness of outputs and activities.....	23
4.7 Cost-effectiveness.....	23
4.8 Cooperation among GEF partners during implementation.....	24
5. Project Impact Issues.....	25
5.1 Educated a broad-based national audience about the GEF- its mission, strategy, policies and procedures.....	25
5.1.1 Number and variety of participants attending the workshop.....	26
5.1.2 Number of persons and percentage of respondents able to provide examples of global environmental issues they learned about and some statement of GEF objectives.....	28
5.1.3 Increased media coverage during or after the workshop.....	28
5.1.4 Examples of integration into national sustainable development policies that can be directly related to the workshop.....	30
5.1.5 Examples of commitment statements or actions on biodiversity and climate change that can be directly related to the workshop.....	30
5.2 Promoted country level dialogue on needs and priorities, coordination and sharing of information, including best practise and lessons learned in protecting the global environment.....	31
5.2.1 Number and variety of participants attending workshops.....	31
5.2.2 Examples of knowledge acquired by Focal Points and his/her enhanced role.....	32
5.2.3 Some replication of the workshop format by OFP after the event.....	34
5.2.4 Examples of coordination commitments and /or activities that can clearly be traced back to the workshop including between IAs and with other donors.....	34
5.2.5 Follow-up activities.....	36

5.2.6	New networking sustained.....	37
5.3.	Provided practical information on how to access GEF resources and how to identify, prepare and implement GEF-financed activities.....	39
5.3.1	Increased knowledge of GEF eligibility criteria .....	39
5.3.2	Use made of workshop material after the event.....	39
5.3.3	Examples of improved contributions to GEF projects design, preparation or implementation by participants to workshop .....	40
5.4	Conclusion .....	41
6.	Summary of Recommendations .....	42
6.1	Design .....	42
6.2	Implementation .....	42
6.3	Impacts.....	43

## **List of Figures and Tables**

FIGURE 1: List of indicators used for the evaluation of design issues .....	4
FIGURE 2: Did the CDW meet the OFPs' main interests and needs? .....	6
FIGURE 3: Did the CDW meet the participants' main interests and needs?.....	7
FIGURE 4: Table of assumptions.....	10
FIGURE 5: List of indicators used to assess project implementation.....	13
FIGURE 6: Performance of Local UNDP Office .....	14
FIGURE 7: Satisfaction Level by Modules' Function and Quality.....	19
FIGURE 8: Average rating of satisfaction of Modules for selected workshops.....	21
FIGURE 9: Type and level of sector representation to CDW conducted from 2000-2002 .....	26
FIGURE 10: Are you aware of any media coverage on global environmental issues that took place in your host country during or after the CDW? .....	29
FIGURE 11: Do you consider the GEF Operational Focal Point more effective in advocating global environmental issues following the CDW? .....	33
FIGURE 12: Are you aware of any follow-up activities that took place after the CDW?.....	36
FIGURE 13: Are you satisfied with the follow-up activities?.....	37
FIGURE 14: Are you aware of another event with similar focus to that of the CDW that has taken place since the initial workshop in your country? .....	37
FIGURE 15: Have you sustained some of the contacts you have developed at the CDW? .....	38

## 1. Introduction

The review team was mandated by the GEF to carry out the Evaluation of the GEF Country Dialogue Workshop project over the period 1999-2002. This review analyses the contribution of the project against its objectives, and considers a range of factors related to the project's design, implementation and impact, that inform on or have affected the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and sustainability of its results. It identifies a number of factors that have facilitated or impeded the achievement of the objectives, and draws from those a list of recommendations to further strengthen the on-going multi-stakeholder dialogue process between GEF and participating countries.

The present evaluation report is in final form. A draft version underwent a review by the GEF inter-agency Steering Committee of the CDW and the GEF/UNDP Monitoring and Evaluation unit. Comments from these constituencies were thoroughly reviewed and integrated as relevant in this final version.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Approach

A team of 3 consultants conducted this review over the period of June to September 2002. From the beginning, the team focused on establishing a review framework that was impartial, transparent, systematic and comprehensive, and that integrated the views of the GEF inter-agency Workshop Steering Committee regarding methodological choices.

### 2.2 Review coverage and evaluation matrix

After consultation with the Workshop Coordinator, UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, and the Steering Committee (SC), the review team devised a comprehensive evaluation matrix built around the three main levels to be evaluated in relation to this project, namely: project design, project implementation and project impacts. The development of this matrix entailed a preliminary review of the project documentation available. It led to the adjustment of the originally identified indicators of project progress and results (as stated in the Project Document) to provide for a set of indicators that was in line with the intent of the original project design, while offering a more focussed, adequate and valid basis for the evaluation of achievements. The SC had the opportunity to comment on the evaluation matrix early in the process. The evaluation matrix, provided in Annex<sup>1</sup>, became the organizing framework for data collection, analysis, and for the overall structure of this report.

### 2.3 Sources of Information and Data Collection Instruments Used

Four data collection instruments were used to respond to the information requirements identified in the evaluation matrix, and ensure that results could be crosschecked and triangulated including:

**Desk studies:** A comprehensive review of literature and reports was conducted by the review team throughout the period of June to September 2002. Sources were diverse and included project documentation, project reviews (e.g. the PIR 2001), minutes from the SC meetings, workshop material, 'Workshop Evaluation Reports', newspaper clippings from local media, as well as reports prepared after the CDW workshops by some of the countries covered. Throughout this evaluation report, detailed references and quotes are

---

<sup>1</sup> All annexes can be found in Volume II of this Review

provided from various documents and are used to exemplify more generally points that came across strongly in the vast body of literature reviewed. A complete bibliography of all material reviewed is provided is also provided in Annex.

**Questionnaires:** Three questionnaires based on the evaluation matrix were developed to solicit information from GEF Operational Focal Points, UNDP Country Office representatives, and CDW participants. Draft versions of these questionnaires were reviewed by the SC and UNDP/GEF M&E unit, and adjustments were made based on the comments received to ensure that all relevant aspects were indeed covered through this survey process. Extensive discussion took place on the wording of the questionnaires to ensure that all parties viewed the tool as balanced, unbiased, and structured, so as to yield relevant information. The original English versions were translated in Spanish and French, and questionnaires were sent to respective respondents from the three groups mentioned above. Confidentiality was guaranteed to the respondents in order to encourage frank and honest responses.

In total, 32 responses were received from developing country parties out of a possible 102 questionnaires sent, representing a response rate of 32% overall: 10 responses were received from OFPs, 7 from UNDP Country Offices, and 15 from participants. The questionnaires were originally sent to OFPs, UNDP Country Office representatives and workshop participants from 12 countries having conducted Country Dialogue Workshops. The country and respondent selection was made with the use of appropriate criteria to ensure a balance in the geographical, sectoral, and organizational representation, as well as to provide for a cross-section of views on both early and more recent CDW workshops. One follow up e-mail was sent, and one follow up phone call was made to people being surveyed, in order to elicit a greater response rate. A certain number of questionnaires were eventually administered by phone to ensure an adequate level of responses. The sample of countries covered was also enlarged for OFPs, in order to ensure a large enough number of respondents. The final breakdown of responses offers a fair representation of OFPs and UNDP local offices considering that, in total, 34 CDWs were held. However, the CDW participant response rate to the survey was found to be low, as 15 completed questionnaires were received out of 68 questionnaires sent.

Responses were compiled and analysed by stakeholder group, and key findings are presented both in the text of this report and through summary graphs and tables. The size of the sample and the overall representativeness of OFP and UNDP local offices responses provide a good degree of statistical validity and precision in the findings. Furthermore, the questionnaire was addressed to a well-informed and concerned population, which allows the evaluation to use responses as a primary source of information with confidence, and as one of the several bases for analysis. The responses from other participants to the workshop, taken from Country Evaluation Reports, are also used in the analysis, but only provide some more nuanced views, and complement other sources, as it is clear that the size of the participant sample from the evaluation survey is too small to make for a valid statistical analysis alone.

**Interviews:** To gather in depth information and to complement information gathered from questionnaires, 11 semi-structured interviews were conducted with key Steering Committee members, GEF Secretariat members, and Implementation Agencies' representatives. These included representatives from UNDP, UNEP, World Bank, GEFSEC and the GEF Workshop Coordination Unit. A list of interviewees is also provided in an Annex of this report. Again, interview questions were based on key issues extracted from the evaluation matrix that were of particular relevance to the role of these organizations and interviewees in the design and implementation process. All interviews were conducted by telephone from July to September 2002. Given the nature of the respondents to this interview process (key informants, well aware of the overall CDW process), the findings from these interviews clearly represent an additional reliable primary source of information.

**Field Visits:** One observation mission in Albania and one field visit in Vietnam were conducted to ensure that the review team had some direct primary sources of information from the field. The Albania mission was

primarily an opportunity to observe the process of conducting a CDW (Albania was the only country where a CDW was being conducted as this evaluation unfolded). The goal of the mission was to inform and complement other information sources. Observations made by the evaluation team during the Albania workshop are used to that effect throughout the report. The short two-day Vietnam field visit, which took advantage of another unrelated mission being carried out in Vietnam by one of the evaluation team members, allowed the evaluation team to elicit further responses to the questionnaire, and conduct interviews with OFPs, UNDP Country Offices and other participants to the CDW.

### **3. Project Design Issues**

The design of the Country Dialogue Workshops (CDWs) was developed with key contextual considerations. From the outset, it was acknowledged that an insufficient number of client country stakeholders understood the GEF's mission, process, and procedures, which prevented an active and effective identification of GEF project opportunities and adequate preparation, implementation and replication of GEF projects. Also recognized was the fact that a general lack of awareness of opinion and decision makers did not favor proactive measures to promote action on global environmentally related issues. Drawing on the work that is being carried out through GEF-financed enabling activities, the CDW Workshops were to contribute to more country-driven project ideas and should promote continued country level consultation among key stakeholders.

In light of the key lessons learned and identified from past experiences<sup>2</sup>, the design for the CDW included a wide range of principles that were to respond to evolving country needs. The following principles guided the design of the CDW:

- ◆ A balanced geographical representation of countries having a CDW;
- ◆ A balanced institutional representation within each CDW;
- ◆ Ensuring Country driven-ness of CDW design and organization;
- ◆ A promotion and diffusion of best practices and lessons learned throughout the process;
- ◆ The inclusion of presentations and discussions on strategies, action plans, and reports developed in the country/region, in each CDW;
- ◆ The inclusion of modules on international conventions, convention and GEF processes and decisions, and;
- ◆ The inclusion of a module presented by STAP to favor the establishment of relationships and networks with national scientists and scientific institutions.<sup>3</sup>

In order to assess the quality of design in relation to initial expectations, the following set of indicators were agreed upon with the CDW Steering Committee and used in analysis:

---

<sup>2</sup> Project Development Workshop Program, outreach workshops, open houses and interactive presentations organized during the Convention and Council Meetings, and GEF Assembly as well as the regular consultations with NGO's have been referred to for developing the CDW format.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Global Project, Multi-Focal Area, Project Document, 1999, p. 7

FIGURE 1: List of indicators used for the evaluation of design issues

Issues for evaluation	Performance Indicators
A. Quality of design for delivery of planned outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequacy of design in view of implementation reality encountered, (i.e: sources of difficulty or of positive surprises; sources of delays; or, costs that can be related to unidentified requirements at the time of the design, etc...)</li> </ul>
B. Quality of design in view of changing GEF context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear relationship between the design, adaptation strategy and actions (if any), and the changing context</li> </ul>
C. Quality of design in view of country needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear relationship between the focus of workshops and the expressed needs by the countries</li> <li>• Appropriateness of selection criteria for supporting a workshop, in view of needs expressed by countries</li> </ul>
D. Relevance of design in view of OPS2 assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequacy of design in view of OPS2 recommendations</li> </ul>
E. Quality of design in terms of risk/assumptions identified and mitigation strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk/assumptions that have materialized (foreseen or unforeseen)</li> </ul>

### 3.1 Quality of design for delivery of expected outputs

#### *Adequacy of design in view of implementation reality encountered*

The design of the CDW included proper mechanisms to favor optimal coordination among key CDW stakeholders. In that respect, it presented adequate arrangements for meetings, following the lead of country requests for a workshop, and applying the selection criteria for a host country, as well as the type and structure of workshop. These arrangements were set to allow for maximum flexibility in implementation. The design of the overall agenda, and the individual modules address the areas expected to be touched upon by the CDWs. The design can be considered adequate, and it has proven to be generally appreciated from the gathered responses from participants to the CDWs

As more than 50 workshops were expected to be delivered in 3 years around the globe, with a large number of participants in each workshop, time was an important factor and key element to consider in the planning and delivering of the workshops. There may be some areas to improve in terms of an overall 'lack of preparation time' for the project as a whole and an attempt to address the delays that occurred at the outset of the CDW process.

An overall 6-month delay in the implementation of the project occurred, as the project design did not appropriately consider the time necessary for the development of some CDW tools such as various support instruments, further development of certain modules, glossaries, the website, etc. The PIR 2001 noted that 'the time frame to conduct 50 CDWs over the three-year period will likely have to be reconsidered to compensate for the six-month start up period'<sup>4</sup>.

This challenge can be addressed by ensuring, in the future, that there is always significant time allocated to project development. However, out of the 50 expected country workshops, a total of 34 have taken place so far, 3 of which have been regional CDWs, involving more than one country. By the end of the project, with

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Project Implementation Review (PIR) 2001, p. 8

the time extension, the number of CDWs is likely to reach the original goal of 50 workshops in total. So although there may have been some initial challenges during project start-up, the CDW has become quite efficient and effective in project delivery and implementation, organizing and delivering workshops at a rate of about one every three weeks.

**Recommendation:** *It is recommended that future initiatives such as the CDW adequately account for needed preparation time in the start up phase, especially in view of the need to develop materials and modules that are flexible and can be easily adapted to country needs.*

In addition, there was an inadequate provision made, in the original design, for translation into local languages, both in terms of cost and time required. Considering the importance of transferring knowledge through culturally appropriate mediums, such provisions are paramount. It is fair to say though, that the WCU did, however, display significant efforts in accommodating countries' translation needs, in many instances, and that all material was available in the major UN languages. The original Project Document made provisions for materials to be available only in English, French and Spanish. The CDW programme went beyond the languages outlined in the document, and produced official versions such as Arabic and Russian, as well as other languages in some cases. There may be a need, however, to expand the resources available for this, and to ensure that project design adequately allows for translation time and costs to be factored into overall design for individual workshops.

**Recommendation:** *It is also recommended that there be adequate resources and time allocated for ensuring that the proper and appropriate translation of workshop materials is secured for each CDW, where possible, in order to ensure a culturally appropriate medium for good knowledge transfer.*

One further design issue to be discussed is the project design's original set of indicators for measuring and evaluating project achievement of objectives, as mentioned in the section on methodology. These indicators were found to be somewhat deficient, both by the evaluation team and the Steering Committee for the CDWs. The causality for some of the expressed results was somewhat unclear, and there was a need to focus appropriate indicators in order to allow a good tracking and measurement of impacts that the CDW can be expected to deliver. Therefore, the evaluation team, together with the SC, reworked and re-worded indicators to have an evaluation matrix that is more appropriate in view of a results-based approach to evaluation.

### 3.2 Quality of design in view of the changing GEF context

The GEF places high importance on the need to proceed using a coordinated approach. The CDW design was to incorporate this perspective by presenting the GEF and its IAs as a 'family' of institutions, or one unit. The CDWs were also intended to facilitate a national dialogue in a wide range of sectors on the GEF and its activities, towards the ends of achieving country ownership of activities, which would be funded in part by the GEF. Within that framework, the workshops were about enhanced knowledge and awareness, but also about enhancing countries' abilities to deal with the GEF. This is to be understood in a context of ample GEF resources and the desire to increase the number of GEF funded projects. The CDWs were originally designed rather well to address these GEF expected results and intentions.

As the overall GEF context shifted, the design of the CDWs was to be altered as well. The GEF has been moving towards a programmatic context, and is facing scarcer resources. The CDW focus shifted to a national dialogue around the setting of priorities in support of the implementation of Conventions (Multilateral Environmental Agreements) in accordance with these changes. One of the tangible results of this shift has been the reduced length of modules concerning 'project development'.

From this broad perspective, it can be said that the design of the CDW, while appropriate in view of the existing GEF context at the time CDW was designed, has also evolved over time to account for the changing broad GEF operating context.

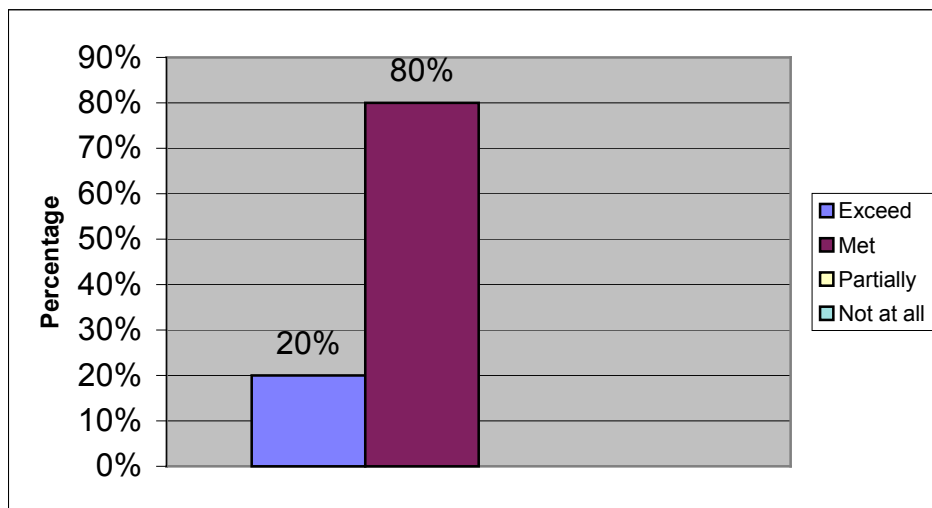
### 3.3 Quality of design in view of country needs

#### 3.3.1 *Clear relationship between focus of workshops and expressed needs by the countries*

The important relationship between Workshop focus and the specific needs expressed by countries can be examined by comparing what various stakeholders expected from the workshops, and what the CDW were actually focused on. When the evaluation team surveyed OFPs as to what they had wanted and expected from the Workshops, the following main points emerged:

- ◆ To reach a better understanding of the GEF and its procedures;
- ◆ To define country priorities for GEF funding;
- ◆ To enable more effective implementation of global conventions; and
- ◆ To strengthen country dialogue and partnership.

*FIGURE 2: Did the CDW meet the OFPs' main interests and needs?*



Generally, and in accordance with the table presented above, the OFPs' main interests and needs in holding and/or participating in a CDW were met or exceeded. However, the following comments were brought forth from participant respondents to the questionnaire distributed by the evaluation team:

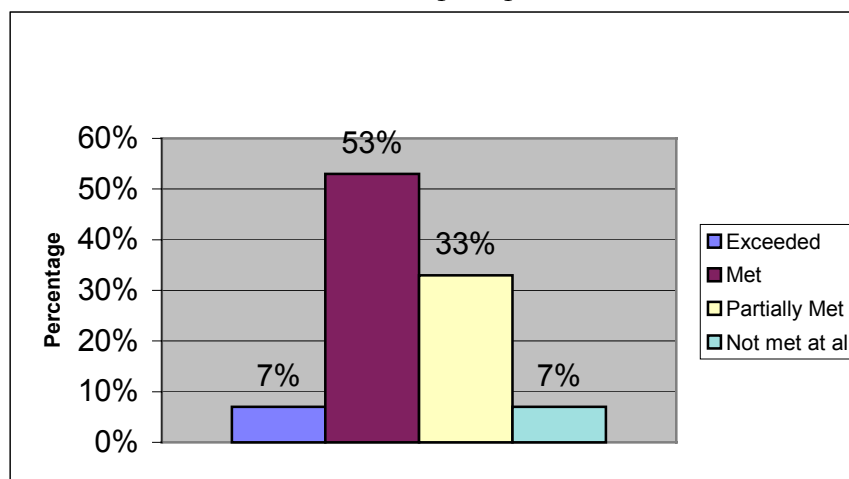
- ◆ Participants need to be accompanied more thoroughly after the workshop. A formal follow-up plan should be developed during design of the CDWs to better assist the country in this effort;
- ◆ Country needs should be listened to more, in relation to GEF priorities, and this should be integrated into the design of CDWs, and;
- ◆ Quality of project implementation should be better addressed in the design of modules of the CDWs, and the focus should be on project implementation rather than project development, this is more important to countries.

When participants were asked what they wanted and expected from CDWs, the following main points emerged:

- ◆ To learn more about GEF Mechanisms, its Operational Programs and procedures;
- ◆ To learn about the major fields of interest for project application;
- ◆ To learn how to propose, prepare and implement GEF projects;
- ◆ To give and get clear solutions for the problems facing the country;
- ◆ To share experiences with other coordinators in other countries;

It is clear that the design of the CDWs is in line with some of the above-mentioned country level needs according to workshop participants and OFPs, especially with regard to enhanced knowledge of the GEF and its procedures. The design of the Workshops clearly addressed the majority of these areas. Design aspects are weaker, however, with regards to the issue of discussing country solutions to problems, and sharing experiences with coordinators in other countries. The table below substantiates this finding as well:

*FIGURE 3: Did the CDW meet the participants' main interests and needs?*



Local UNDP office respondents mentioned similar areas of interest to be covered by the CDWs as participants did, but also added that they expected information dissemination to a broad national audience about the GEF. The need and expectation concerning information dissemination was certainly handled well by the CDW design, and this can be considered one of the strong aspects of the CDWs design.

In terms of having CDW design in line with what countries want and need, data suggests that there is a need to ensure that the dialogue between the CDW Coordination Unit and countries be broadened to include other stakeholders to ensure that the design of individual country workshops corresponds even more to individual country needs. Many of the participants other than OFPs and local UNDP office representatives would have liked to have a more important role in the design of individual CDWs.

Some other sources of data support this point, suggesting that there were cases where certain modules were presented, that could be considered less relevant to a particular audience. For example, in Albania's CDW, a session on the role of the private sector was not well-received, and was possibly not well placed, due to the fact that no private sector participants were in attendance at the Workshop. With a stronger focus on ensuring that the workshop design is in line with more broadly expressed country needs, these potential problems could be avoided.

In conclusion, it is clear from the principles of CDW design, and from the design contained in the Project Document for the CDWs, that the workshops and the process of implementation, favour a country-driven approach, wherein needs of countries are important in the setting of the agenda. Much of the data collected, including that from interviews with the SC, the GEFSEC, and IA representatives, support the finding that the initial design of the CDW corresponded to various perceptions of country needs. However, it is clear that there is room for improvement in this area, as there is room for further incorporation of country level input from a broader audience into the design process, and room to further tailor CDWs to specific country needs.

**Recommendation:** *It is recommended that there be adequate time allocated and action taken to ensure that there is a high level of dialogue with a broader array of national stakeholders during CDW design. This could be achieved through the conduct of a pre-workshop needs assessment and meetings involving a broader representation of CDW participants.*

### *3.3.2 Appropriateness of selection criteria for support to a workshop in view of needs expressed by countries*

The project document pointed out that country requests for a workshop made through their GEF Operational Focal Points, would be prioritized by the SC according to objective criteria as part of the needs assessment process, and these criteria included:

- ◆ Eligibility, i.e. ratification of relevant conventions;
- ◆ Recipient countries that have not previously hosted a national or sub-regional workshop;
- ◆ Demonstration of a high level of commitment by the focal point to assist with workshop planning and organization;
- ◆ Cost-effectiveness (e.g. utilizing opportunities provided by other events, clustering of neighbouring countries, regional coverage);
- ◆ Lack of strong pipeline of GEF projects;
- ◆ Portfolio/program gaps;
- ◆ Significance of concerns in one or more focal areas;
- ◆ Demonstration effects; and,
- ◆ Submission of NBSAP or National Communication in Climate Change.

Most of the respondents from the SC, GEFSEC and IA interviews conducted found the selection criteria for support of a workshop to be useful guidance. While the rationale behind these criteria was strong in the early days of the CDW, the changing GEF context discussed earlier, the renewed emphasis on capacity building, coordination function and communication prescribed by OPS2 (discussed in detail later on), as well as evolving country needs, may necessitate a revision of those at this stage and for future similar initiatives, in order to give greater flexibility and to further focus the CDW on the emerging challenges for the GEF and its partners. As many would rightly argue, GEF priorities have changed considerably over the past 4 years. In addition, in numerous countries, some participants and interviewees indicated that there are a mounting number of challenges, which reside in the implementation of the activities already under way, like ensuring the commitment of various national stakeholders, including those from the less traditional economic development sectors to the implementation of the global conventions, and their mainstreaming in national development.

***In view of these factors, the GEF should build on the selection criteria set for the CDWs, and reflect on the need to refocus the priority for country selection for CDWs. Below is a suggested list of criteria for future discussion within the framework of a renewed CDW:***

- ◆ *Eligibility, i.e. ratification of relevant conventions;*
- ◆ *Urgent need identified in the country;*
- ◆ *Willingness to engage in a dialogue on strategic and programmatic priorities at the country level;*
- ◆ *Transparent and inclusive nature of GEF coordinating structure in the country and/or potential to further the dialogue on the instigation of such a structure;*
- ◆ *Demonstration of high level of commitment by the focal point to assist with workshop planning and organization;*
- ◆ *Demonstration of commitment by the focal point to involve further in the national dialogue non-traditional economic development actors;*
- ◆ *Potential for synergies between the CDW and other GEF and IA interventions focused on building the coordination capacity of the GEF OFP;*
- ◆ *Extent of challenges faced by the country in implementing the conventions; and,*
- ◆ *Potential to increase leverage other sources of funding on global environmental issues in support of national priorities.*

### 3.4 Relevance of design in view of OPS2 assessment

The evaluation team assessed the relevance of design in relation to the OPS2 recommendation related to the pursuing of efforts to support capacity development of OFPs, the national GEF coordinating structures and the country dialogue workshops<sup>5</sup>. The Second Overall Performance Study (OPS2) was clear about the need to support Operational Focal Points (OFPs) and the CDWs overall, in a broader attempt to transfer and enhance knowledge about the GEF and its activities. The OPS2 states, among other things, that the GEF Operational Focal Points, need to be supported in order to become more effective advocates for GEF issues and activities in their countries<sup>6</sup>.

The design does include some provisions related to pursuing efforts to support capacity development of the OFPs. References to developing the capacity of the client country stakeholders, opinion makers and communicators, as well as the OFPs, are made in numerous sections of the project document. The sections related to the ‘problems to be addressed’, ‘expected results’, ‘target beneficiaries’, as well as the ‘project strategy’, present an overall approach and expected results related to the capacity development of main country stakeholders. In particular, the initial design of the ‘Country level module’ is clearly aiming at developing countries capacity through<sup>7</sup>:

- (a) a review of the functions of the OFP and good practice examples of how some countries have organized their GEF coordination activities;
- (b) a discussion on how the national OFP will perform its functions; and
- (c) an identification of the kind of assistance that can be provided from the GEF and suggest how it might be provided.

---

<sup>5</sup> Global Environment Facility, The first decade of the GEF, Second overall performance study, 2002, p. 110

<sup>6</sup> Global Environment Facility, The first Decade of the GEF, Second Overall Performance Study, 2002

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Global Project, Multi-Focal Area, Project Document, 1999, p. 10

The CDW design is thus clearly in line with the principles behind the OPS2 assessment. However, as we will see in the section of this report discussing the actual impacts of the CDW, it is clear that more is required to ensure a greater effect on national coordination capacity.

### 3.5 Quality of design in terms of risk/assumptions identified and mitigation strategy

From the outset, the project developers assessed various risks associated with the project. Ten assumptions related to the success of the project were indeed presented in the Project Document, and these are found below as well as four additional assumptions, which were identified during implementation<sup>8</sup>:

FIGURE 4: *Table of Assumptions*

<b>Assumptions Identified during Project Design<sup>9</sup></b>	<b>Probability that it WILL hold<sup>10</sup></b>
<i>Workshop requests from priority countries received and acted upon.</i>	H
<i>Diverse groups of stakeholders identified, invited to and elect to participate in workshops.</i>	H
<i>Local/national media show an interest in global environmental issues.</i>	S
<i>Presentations and supporting print and visual resources provide critical linkage between knowledge and project preparation process.</i>	H
<i>Existence of minimum country level institutional capacity to absorb and disseminate newly acquired GEF informational and project preparation capacities.</i>	H-M (varies by country)
<i>Participants disseminate their increased knowledge of global environmental issues through their respective constituencies.</i>	H-M (varies by institution)
<i>Enhanced country level coordination capacities are sustained; LAs and GEFSEC actively engage in necessary follow-up to workshops.</i>	S
<i>Existence of GEF-eligible project opportunities in the countries.</i>	H
<i>LAs able to effectively respond to an anticipated increase in requests and pipeline volume.</i>	S
<i>Existence of media network</i>	H
<i>*GEF OFP has capacity to organize a CDW</i>	H-L (varies by country)
<i>*GEF OFPs knowledgeable about national GEF portfolio</i>	H-L (varies by country)
<i>*GEF OFP turnover will not be too heavy</i>	M
<i>*GEF OFPs will be able to engage key (high level) sectoral decision makers</i>	S-L (varies by country)

Out of these fourteen assumptions, six in particular have materialized, and will need to be considered in the context of a broader discussion on the future of the GEF dialogue process with its partner countries. These assumptions are:

<sup>8</sup> It should be noted that the final four of these assumptions, denoted above by (\*), were identified by the CDW Management (in the 2001 and 2002 PIRs), during implementation, and were not listed in the original Project Document.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Project Implementation Review (PIR) 2001, p. 7

<sup>10</sup> High (H), substantial (S), modest (M), low (L)

- ◆ **Diverse groups of Stakeholders can be identified and participate in the workshops:** Although great efforts were made to ensure a multi-stakeholder representation at the workshops (as is discussed later in this report), it has proven difficult to elicit actual participation of certain stakeholder groups, such as the private sector. The CDW Project Document mentions the necessity to ensure participation of key stakeholders and to consult the countries' main stakeholders<sup>11</sup>. "In order to ensure an effective workshop with sustainable results, it is essential that each workshop has the participation of multiple constituencies, including NGOs and local communities. The workshops were to ensure that a full cross-section of government agencies participate, including the focal points for the two conventions for which the GEF serves as the financial mechanism. It is proposed that the NGO community be consulted on the design of the workshop modules, particularly on those areas of special interest to them<sup>12</sup>". There is indeed some degree of consultation, together with the national level partners, included in the project design, yet, there may be room for improvements in terms of the measures to achieve this important goal. The design did not provide precise guidelines in respect to the consultation process with country stakeholders in order to better assess their respective needs and adjust the workshop accordingly. Comments from some interviews with members of the SC, GEFSEC and IA representatives, reinforce the above observation. Beyond consultation in design, additional steps may be required to elicit further participation from the private sector and NGOs (as well as other actors such as line ministries), and this is discussed further in a subsequent section of this report.
  
- ◆ **GEF OFP has capacity to organize a CDW and GEF OFP has sufficient knowledge of the GEF in general and of their national GEF Portfolio:** As reported in the PIR 2001 evaluation<sup>13</sup>, the project design included an assumption that the OFPs would have the capacity to organize a CDW, as well as sufficient knowledge of the GEF in general and their national GEF portfolio specifically. The results of our evaluation confirm that the level of experience, knowledge and capacity varied widely amongst the OFPs. The level of experience, knowledge and capacity also reflects in some cases the varying level of OFP commitment to the CDW process. The findings from this evaluation (discussed in detail in subsequent sections of this report) point to a greatly varying capacity of the OFPs in view of both logistical and coordination capacity, as well as knowledge of the GEF. This situation has been a constraint to the project. The project has adapted by involving further the WCU and the UNDP Country office in organizational tasks. However, the greatest challenge remains; that of building further the OFP capacity to allow it to play an enhanced coordination and knowledge dissemination role at the national level.
  
- ◆ **Enhanced country level coordination capacities are sustained, and IAs and GEFSEC actively engage in necessary follow-up to workshops:** As we will see in the discussion on the impacts of the CDW later in this report, much more is required to help develop and sustain country level coordination capacity, including in terms of follow up by the GEF and its IAs in supporting this in a concerted fashion and as part of a longer term capacity development process.

---

11 United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Global Project, Multi-focal Area, Project Document, 1999, p. 6 & 7

12 United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Global Project, Multi-focal Area, Project Document, 1999, p. 8

13 United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Project Implementation Review (PIR) 2001

- ◆ **IAs able to effectively respond to an anticipated increase in request and pipeline volume:** As discussed earlier in this section, this ability to respond to an increase in request for project support was indeed present for most of the lifetime of the CDW, albeit not without some efficiency concerns<sup>14</sup>. As noted earlier, the financial context within which the GEF is operating has however been changing over the past 18 months in particular and the CDW has adjusted by refocusing the dialogue at the strategic level and on programmatic priorities at the country level rather than on project development. This refocusing will have to be further encouraged and the CDW process will have to build on the need to leverage additional resources (and involve the relevant actors in this respect) as this financial reality will be with the GEF and its IAs for the foreseeable future.
  
- ◆ **GEF OFPs will be able to engage key (high level) sectoral decision makers:** OFPs had limited success in ensuring the participation of officials from sectoral ministries in addition to representatives from the environment and natural resources ministries (the composition of the participation to the CDWs is analysed in more detail in the later section of this report on implementation issues). The GEF dialogue process would gain from a more substantial involvement of sectoral ministries. The capacity of OFPs to stir that participation clearly varies from one country to another. Yet, implementation and mainstreaming of the conventions into national development will require this explicit engagement from these non-traditional actors under the CDW process. This will need to be further addressed if the CDW is to influence mainstreaming.

Findings of this evaluation suggest that some of the risks for this project were underestimated. The design of future initiatives of a similar scope of the CDWs, should give special attention to developing clear mitigation strategies to address these.

#### **4. Project Implementation Issues**

The delivery of the CDW involves the GEFSEC, as well as three GEF Implementing Agencies: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) was also involved as the executing agency. The planned role of the Implementing Agencies, through their respective GEF Coordination Units, country and regional offices, is to bring expertise on GEF policies, strategy and procedures to translate the Workshop program into an enhanced national dialogue, promote country ownership of GEF-financed activities as well as building the knowledge and project development capacities in GEF-recipient countries<sup>15</sup>.

Within this broad framework set in the project document, the set of indicators presented below was discussed with the CDW SC and has been used to assess the *effectiveness, quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness* of the implementation of the CDW while gathering.

---

<sup>14</sup> See for instance: Baastel. Second review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism for the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. 2001.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Global Project, Multi-Focal Area, Project Document, 1999, p. 4

FIGURE 5: List of indicators used to assess project implementation

Issues for Evaluation	Performance Indicators
A. Effectiveness of UNDP's overall management role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actual performance of UNDP in view of their Expected role (WCU and Local Offices)</li> </ul>
B. Effectiveness of the role of OFPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actual vs. Expected role played by OFPs in view of the objectives to be achieved</li> <li>Discussion of the Variance</li> </ul>
C. Effectiveness of the role of the Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actual vs. Expected role of SC in view of the objectives to be achieved</li> <li>Discussion of the Variance</li> </ul>
D. Quality of activities, outputs, and materials produced and presented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overall level of satisfaction with workshops</li> <li>Quality of material produced, logistics, presentations and website</li> <li>Quality of website</li> <li>Use made of workshop material after the CDW is complete (covered in the Impact section)</li> </ul>
E. Timeliness of outputs and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actual vs. Expected schedule of activities</li> <li>Discussion of the Variance</li> </ul>
F. Cost-effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actual vs. Expected costs</li> <li>Discussion of the Variance</li> </ul>

#### 4.1 Effectiveness of the Workshop Coordination Unit

A Workshop Coordination Unit (WCU) was to be housed at UNDP headquarters, and was responsible for:

- ◆ Overall planning and coordination of workshops in close collaboration with the other Implementing Agencies and the GEF Secretariat;
- ◆ Supporting Country Offices and country focal points in organizing workshops;
- ◆ Day-to-day project management, supervision and coordination, and;
- ◆ Monitoring, feedback and follow-up for workshops.

The WCU was also mandated to assemble and distribute information packages and to coordinate distance-learning arrangements for countries not benefiting from a GEF Workshop, or those having to wait for clustering arrangements. The WCU is held accountable for quality control of workshops, and operates under the guidance of the inter-agency Workshop Steering Committee<sup>16</sup>.

The WCU's actual performance has been found to be in accordance with their expected role in the CDW process, according to responses received in both questionnaires and interviews, and from literature covered. Data gathered from IAs, GEFSEC, SC and OFP interviews, and from the literature review, suggest that the WCU has done an excellent job in the overall coordination, planning and management of these Workshops. The WCU worked well with the GEFSEC and the IAs and offered good support to countries and local offices for planning and implementation of the project. In addition, the WCU has ensured a good collection

<sup>16</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Global Project, Multi-Focal Area, Project Document, 1999, p. 4, 13

of feedback from workshop participants, and has learned lessons throughout the process, as suggested by the improvement in subsequent workshop design.

The WCU has also been responsive and flexible in the implementation, and delivery of the CDW. A three or four day workshop is insufficient to fully address all the potential topics for discussions encompassed under the objectives of the CDW. Therefore, the workshop focus must be tailored for each country based upon close collaboration between the CDW Program and the OFP host institution. This process is usually initiated well in advance, usually 3-6 months, of the CDW. This flexible approach focuses the CDW process to the extent possible and was instrumental in providing a greater sense of ownership for numerous recipient countries.

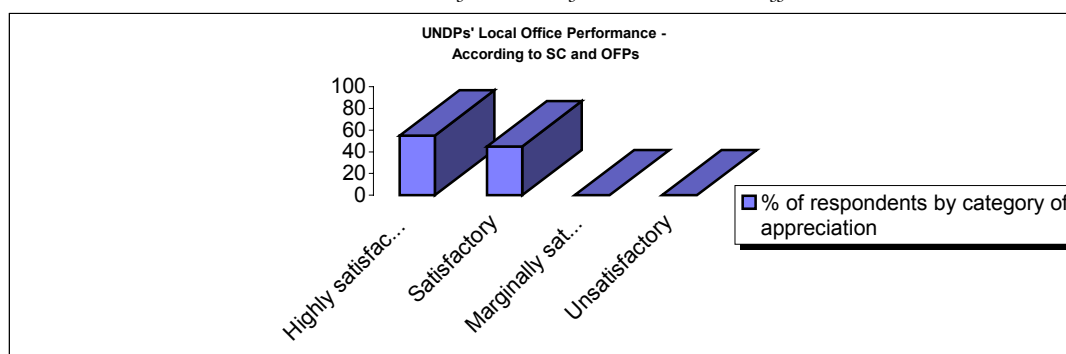
In addition, all respondents have described the performance of the members of the WCU as being very efficient, effective, organized, and professional, in terms of project management, supervision and coordination. This was also evident from the evaluation team field observations. This reflects very well on the WCU, the CDW Coordinator and the Programme Associate.<sup>17</sup>

## 4.2 Effectiveness of the UNDP Local/Country Offices

UNDP Local/Country Offices were expected to play a key role in the CDW process. They were expected to support national institutional capacities, and specifically OFPs, who were to be in the lead in the planning, organization and execution of the Workshops<sup>18</sup>.

The observations and findings from the field corroborated data collected from questionnaires and interviews, revealing that UNDP's local office performance was, in general, highly rated for the administrative and logistical support provided to the national constituencies. Almost half, or 45% of the OFP questionnaire respondents, rated the UNDP's local office performance in assisting the government to organize the workshop as 'highly satisfactory'. About 55% of respondents rated their performance as 'satisfactory'. This supports the findings of the PIR 2001, which noted that "The planning and coordination support provided by the UNDP country offices in the majority of cases has been excellent, and its unique value to the program should be noted<sup>19</sup>.

*FIGURE 6: Performance of Local UNDP Office*



---

<sup>17</sup> WCU Coordinator is Stephen Gold and the Programme Associate is Frances Lim

<sup>18</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Global Project, Multi-Focal Area, Project Document, 1999, p. 9

<sup>19</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Project Implementation Review (PIR) 2001, p. 8

Given the time limits involved, and overall context for implementation of CDWs, the majority of respondents were generally impressed by the input of the UNDP country office into the process. The OFPs particularly appreciated the local offices' facilitation role, their logistical coordination and organization of the workshop overall, and their role in enhancing networking and collaboration throughout the process. UNDP local offices were also quite involved in needed translation and good in-kind support. This was certainly exemplified in Albania, where the UNDP local office played a central and vital role in the organization of the CDW, on-going administrative support to the WCU, and its related partners, as well as providing a venue for some of the pre-workshop and post-workshop meetings and follow-up work that took place.

It should be noted that generally speaking, the actual role played by UNDP local offices can be considered to have gone above and beyond the expected role. The ability of these offices to be flexible and responsive to needs during implementation is highly regarded in the CDW process. In many cases, a less effective role played by the OFPs in the organization of the workshops (to be discussed in the next section below), has been well supported and enhanced by a greater and more effective role played by the UNDP local offices, to the benefit of workshop implementation overall.

Although there was overall appreciation of the UNDP local offices' role, some respondents brought forward the following comments for possible areas of improvement:

- ◆ It is important to ensure that UNDP is not organizing all of the workshop alone, in order to ensure a favourable context for the involvement, education and capacity development of the OFPs;
- ◆ The administrative/logistical strength of the local office should be properly complemented by technical expertise related to environmental issues and considerations;

Our review suggests a strong correlation between the UNDP's and the WCU's expected and actual roles, both in terms of the performance of the WCU, and the role played by UNDP's local offices. The WCU can be considered to have performed very effectively in terms of achieving its expected role and objectives, and to have acted in a transparent manner. In a complementary fashion, the in-kind contribution and support offered by UNDP local offices, has been noticed and highly regarded and has significantly contributed to CDW achievements. Both are considered to have been highly flexible and responsive to specific Workshop and country needs.

**Recommendation: *It is recommended that the valuable and commendable work done by the WCU and the UNDP local offices be recognized and built upon in subsequent CDW activities.***

### 4.3 Effectiveness of role of OFPs

The expected role of the GEF Operational Focal Points, in the context of the CDWs, was for them to be centrally involved in the planning and execution of all workshops. "In-country logistics will be managed by the GEF country focal point jointly with the UNDP Country Office, and other IA offices as appropriate"<sup>20</sup>. As such, it was also specified in the OFP's designated role that they take a leadership role in the planning and implementation of the workshops. In addition, it was expected that a high level of commitment would need to be demonstrated by the focal point to assist with workshop planning and organization<sup>21</sup>.

---

<sup>20</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Global Project, Multi-Focal Area, Project Document, 1999, p. 13

<sup>21</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Global Project, Multi-Focal Area, Project Document, 1999, p. 13

In terms of overall clarity and understanding of the OFP role, most OFP respondents noted that they understood their role in the implementation process. Some OFP respondents, however, limited their description of their role to either 'gaining knowledge of the GEF' or 'assisting the UNDP office in the organization of the workshop'. This understanding differed slightly from that of participants, as one third of workshop participants' answers revealed that the OFP role was either not known or unclear. The majority of participants revealed that the OFP role was understood as being related to the coordination, organization and provision of information on the GEF's mission, policies and objectives, as part of the CDW process. This perception of the OFP role from the participants' points of view was consistent with the majority of data collected from local UNDP office questionnaire responses.

In terms of the OFP's actual role in the CDW process, and their overall performance and leadership in implementation, the data suggests some variance. The workshop participants' answers revealed that half of the respondents considered that the leadership was either exclusive to OFPs or that the leadership seemed to be shared with the GEFSEC and the IAs. The majority of the OFPs (70%) considered themselves in the lead of, and therefore committed to, the CDW process, either in the form of setting priorities or in general coordination of the event. Yet, it should be noted that OFPs view the leadership of the CDW as being shared between them, the GEFSEC, and UNDP, in terms of setting priorities, and general workshop organization and coordination. This can be considered a fair reflection of the expected role, as set out in the CDW project document. This perception of the role and performance of the OFP appears to be shared by UNDP local office representatives as well, as a slight majority of the respondents (57%) considered the OFP to be taking the lead during the CDW process. This view is well supported by field observations, as in Albania, the OFP was clearly in a leadership role throughout project implementation, and demonstrated good knowledge of the GEF and related issues, and facilitated the dialogue process during the Workshop.

For the minority of respondents who did not find the OFPs to be in a leadership position in the Workshop, it was found that there were some cases where OFPs lacked the capacity and knowledge of the GEF and of the CDW. Overall, the level of knowledge and capacity of individual OFPs had a significant correlation with the level of leadership and commitment demonstrated by the OFP in question. This is corroborated by the findings from the PIR 2001, which pointed out that "It was assumed that the OFPs would have the capacity to organize (both substantively and logistically) a CDW, as well as sufficient knowledge of the GEF in general, and their national GEF portfolio specifically. The level of experience, knowledge and capacity varies widely amongst the OFPs and this assumption has not always held true. The level of experience, knowledge and capacity also reflects in some cases the level of OFP commitment to the CDW process<sup>22</sup>."

The above findings were also supported by the results of our interviews conducted with IAs, GEFSEC and the SC, wherein respondents found the level of leadership and commitment demonstrated by OFPs to vary significantly. Most respondents indicated that the OFPs were taking the leadership in setting the priorities and agenda, while the GEF was taking the lead on coordination-related issues and that the local UNDP office was in the leadership position in the management and operational aspects of the CDW process.

As the data collected suggests, the varying capacity of OFPs varies significantly from country to country and is related to numerous factors. The following factors were mentioned by respondents, as factors affecting the capacity of OFPs in Workshops:

- ◆ OFPs need to be clearly explained their role in the CDW process, and then they must understand it well beforehand, therefore, there may be a need for additional capacity development on this issue;
- ◆ The TORs for OFPs in the context of the CDW need to be clear and understood;

---

22 United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Project Implementation Review (PIR) 2001, p. 8

- ◆ OFPs need to have a strategic understanding of the GEF's role, mandate and processes beforehand, and therefore, there may be a need for additional capacity development on this issue;
- ◆ The level of networking within the Government on issues related to GEF can have an effect on OFP capacity;
- ◆ The overall level and quality of national dialogue processes prior to the CDW can have an effect on OFP commitment and capacity to GEF-CDW;
- ◆ The position of the OFPs within the Government can also affect capacity;
- ◆ The level of implication of the GEF in the country affects the OFP capacity and commitment to GEF-CDW;
- ◆ The type of organizational drive (political, results oriented, bureaucratic) in a given country can affect the OFP capacity and commitment to GEF-CDW;
- ◆ Staff rotation in the Government can also have effects;
- ◆ The level of technical assistance to the OFP may have an effect on capacity and commitment;
- ◆ The type of lessons learned sharing mechanism in place can affect overall capacity and commitment, and;
- ◆ The issue of competing priorities can affect this capacity and commitment, as GEF funding is considered small in relation to other agencies and sources;

As mentioned repeatedly in the OPS2 report, OFPs level of capacity is a key factor to the effective implementation of GEF projects. The CDW Project Document and original intentions may have overestimated the capacity of OFPs to deliver. CDW management, and specifically the WCU (and often the UNDP local offices as well), has been specifically responsive to the varying capacities of OFPs, adjusting its involvement in the planning, coordination and organization of CDWs, according to the gauged capacity and commitment of OFPs in question. This response and support went further, with the recent development and diffusion of a practical guide for OFPs on their roles and conduct in the context a CDW<sup>23</sup>. This new measure responds to OPS2 recommendation for better information provided to the OFPs<sup>24</sup>, and should also contribute, if well diffused, to an improvement of OFPs' overall effectiveness.

In conclusion, the OFPs actual role and performance in light of their expected role significantly varied from Workshop to Workshop. It should be mentioned that in many cases the OFPs were clearly in a leadership position, exemplifying good commitment to the process, and good knowledge of related issues. Yet, it should also be noted that their actual role did not live up to expectations in some other cases. Our review clearly points out that the CDW management encouraged OFPs involvement in the overall CDW process but could only go as far as individual OFPs were willing and/or able to be involved. As shown, this is due to many contributing factors, which should be considered in subsequent initiatives of this type.

#### 4.4 Effectiveness of the Steering Committee

A Workshop Steering Committee, consisting of the GEF Secretariat and Implementing Agencies, and chaired by the lead Implementing Agency on CDW operational matters (UNDP), was to be responsible for:

- ◆ Providing guidance on the development of resource materials;

---

<sup>23</sup> GEF Country Dialogue Workshop Programme, Guide to Conducting a National Global Environment Facility Country Dialogue Workshop, January 2002

<sup>24</sup> IBID, p.53

- ◆ Prioritizing country requests for workshops;
- ◆ Approving individual workshop budgets and agendas, resource persons and invitees, and;
- ◆ Periodically reviewing performance and progress reports from the Workshop Coordination Unit.

The Committee was also to meet 2-3 times annually in person, and more frequently via conference call or virtually (A 'Net Meeting'), to facilitate prompt action on workshop requests on a continuous basis<sup>25</sup>.

Most respondents from the SC, GEFSEC and IAs said that the role of the Steering committee was well understood. Respondents from these groups also stated that there was a crucial importance in viewing the GEF and its IAs as a larger GEF unit or 'family', and that the Steering committee contributed to this process.

In terms of the issue of leadership of the Steering Committee, responses from the SC, GEFSEC and the IA varied, although the majority from this group shared the view that the GEFSEC and WCU was mostly in charge of the coordination, while IAs were more proactive in guiding the process and dialogue at the workshop.

Data collected from interviews and the literature review suggests that the SC's actual role was in accordance with its expected role, as set forth in the Project Document. Most SC, GEFSEC and IA respondents found that the SC performance in the achievement of its mandate was satisfactory, or more than satisfactory. The majority of respondents found that the SC had a favourable approach to adaptation to specific country needs, an element that was found to be key in achieving workshop objectives. All sources of data, including SC minutes, the PIR 2001, and responses from interviews with IAs, GEFSEC and the SC, reveal a high level of diligence and commitment to results by the SC. Some respondents to questionnaires and interviews also mentioned that improvements emerged in the SC's process, as overall transparency and commitment to reaching consensus gained strength over the course of project implementation.

It is important to note that some respondents emphasized the importance of increasing SC effectiveness by bringing it closer to the country level, through an enhanced national dialogue-intensive preparation process for each country CDW. If such a process was to be chaired by the GEFSEC, it would also clearly send the message from the outset that this dialogue process is between the 'GEF family of institutions' and the country.

The CDW SC has performed its role well in light of what was expected. The SC members' collaboration has been an important factor in the success of the CDWs. As an entity in itself, it has evolved and improved in ways that have benefited the overall process. One area that could be improved upon would be to have the SC work more closely with countries at the national level during the planning process, in order for each workshop to engage the GEFSEC and all IAs together in the dialogue process early on, and in a coordinated fashion. It will be important to establish a mechanism that defines clear lines of communication between the SC and the countries in the context of CDWs. This may require additional resources and support.

***Recommendation: It is recommended that adequate and ample resources continue to support the functions of the SC, and that these be increased to allow for enhanced SC dialogue with the countries (through well defined lines of communication), especially prior to the Workshops, to further the strategic dialogue process between the GEF and the countries. Chairmanship of this process by the GEFSEC should be supported.***

---

<sup>25</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Global Project, Multi-Focal Area, Project Document, 1999, p. 9

## 4.5 Quality of Outputs

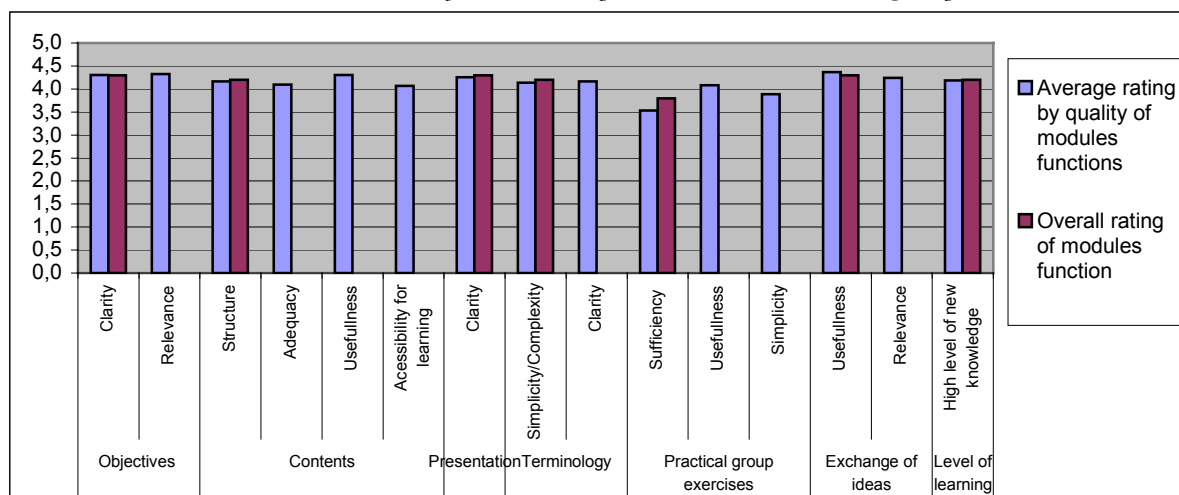
### 4.5.1 Overall level of satisfaction with workshops

The WCU ensured that each CDW included the distribution of an evaluation form to be filled out by participants at the end of each Workshop, and this would be part of an ongoing self-improvement process for the design and implementation of CDWs. The compilation of these evaluations is referred to throughout this report as ‘Country Evaluation Reports’. The participants were asked to evaluate the following aspects of the Workshops to assess the quality of outputs and activities:

- ◆ Clarity and relevance of the workshop objectives;
- ◆ Structure, adequacy, usefulness, and learning accessibility of contents;
- ◆ Simplicity and clarity of terminology;
- ◆ Sufficiency, usefulness and simplicity of practical group exercises;
- ◆ Usefulness and relevance of exchange of ideas; and
- ◆ Level of new knowledge acquired.

A compilation of the results of these evaluations reveals a high level of satisfaction for the majority of participants with the various Workshop modules, with an average overall rating of 4.1 out of a possible 5, for the 15 aspects evaluated. The overall satisfaction of participants, and others, with the CDWs, can be considered as very high.

*FIGURE 7: Satisfaction Level by Modules' Function and Quality*



A more in-depth analysis of these evaluation reports reveals further that the satisfaction level increased with time, which implies Workshop improvement over time. Taking stock of past participants' workshop evaluations, and their associated commentary and suggestions, allowing lessons learned to be rolled into and affect the design of subsequent Workshops, cannot be ignored as a significant contributing factor in the CDWs improvement and overall success.

### 4.5.2 Quality of material produced, logistics, presentations and the website

*Quality of materials and logistics*

According to data collected at the workshops<sup>26</sup>, the majority of participants found the quality of material produced to be adequate, highly useful and accessible. This is supported by the analysis of questionnaire data collected from OFPs, UNDP local representatives, and the SC, GEFSEC and IA interviews, which revealed that the majority of respondents found material to be 'highly satisfactory' or 'satisfactory' overall. This is also corroborated by our own assessment of material received and its use for the Albania workshop (field visit).

In response to comments received from participant evaluations, some specific improvements in material were made to the workshop as the CDW evolved and are noteworthy: Improvement in written material given to participants, and; Improvement in audio-visual material related to presentations made.

Although the majority of respondents to our survey found the material satisfactory, some needed areas of improvements were brought forth:

- ◆ *Translation* was often mentioned as something that could be improved as many translations were said to be not culturally adapted enough at many of the Workshops. Language is an important consideration in engaging in a productive dialogue with countries. The importance of providing translated materials in local languages and providing simultaneous interpretation during the CDWs cannot be overestimated. Countries have repeatedly stated that they would feel more actively engaged with the GEF and have a greater sense of ownership if more materials were available in their local language and systematically made available on the web and through other sources; not just in English, French and Spanish, but also in Russian, Vietnamese and Khmer for example<sup>27</sup>. Yet, it should be noted that there have been many successful translations and adaptations (often thanks to the efforts of the UNDP local offices), even though the original Project Document only made provisions for materials to be available in English, French and Spanish, and Albania is a good example of a success in translation and adaptation to local context.

As stressed in earlier sub-sections, the general *logistics* in terms of planning, organizing and coordinating these Workshops, has been regarded as effective by the overwhelming majority. However, many participants felt that it was important to distribute material before the workshop, and this was evident from responses to questionnaires and from the post-Workshop evaluations. This would allow for the necessary background information to be understood before the Workshop.

Overall, the material developed and presented for the CDW is considered good and appropriate, and it has improved as the CDW has evolved. It is important that all material developed be clear and understandable. There may a need to distribute material beforehand to participants, and also to go further in ensuring that all translation needs are met to ensure proper transfer of knowledge.

***Recommendation: It is recommended that relevant material be sent to participants prior to CDW Workshops to enhance background knowledge and make the most effective and efficient use of time during the Workshops.***

---

<sup>26</sup> Country Evaluation Reports

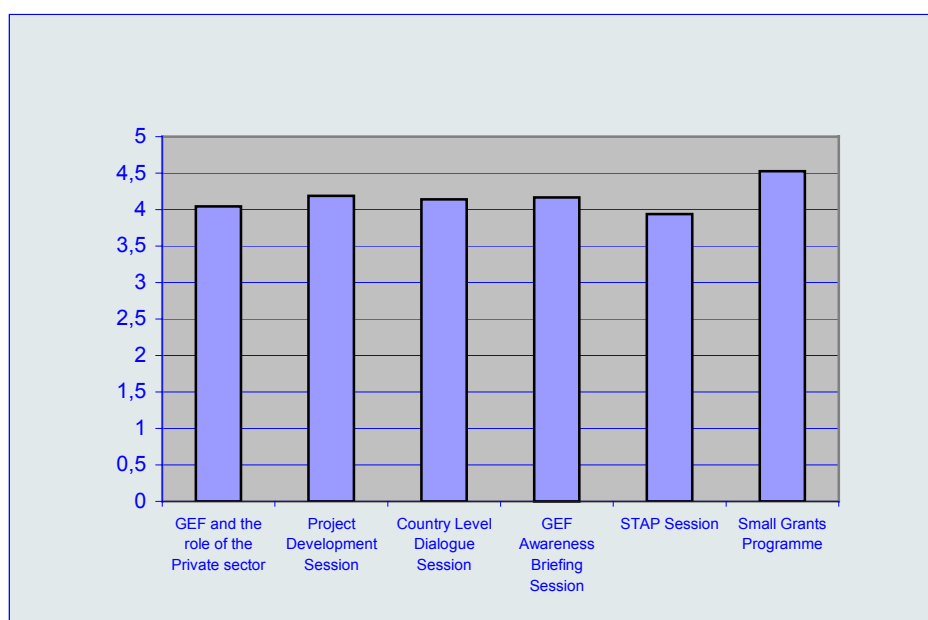
<sup>27</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Project Implementation Review (PIR) 2001, p. 9

### *Quality of presentations and modules*

The *presentations* were rated highly by participants to the Workshops, with an overall rating average of nearly 4.5 for their overall clarity<sup>28</sup> out of 5. This finding is supported by data collected from the SC, GEFSEC, and the IAs as their ratings on this issue ranged from ‘satisfactory’ to ‘highly satisfactory’. The majority of participants support this view, finding the presentations to be adequate overall.

The overall satisfaction with the content of the modules was also rated highly by participants to the workshops. It is noteworthy that there has been significant improvement made to the presentation concerning the private sector, as suggested by data collected and literature reviewed. It was noted, however, from the data collected, that the STAP session scored a bit lower, as the terminology used was difficult, and could have been simpler. The average ratings for modules presented is depicted in the table below:

FIGURE 8: Average rating of satisfaction of Modules for selected workshops



Some data suggests that certain presentations could be improved to enhance participant’s ability to understand and absorb the material being presented. For example, the presentation on ‘incremental cost’ was cited in a minority of cases as needing improvement in terms of being understood by participants. This finding was supported by the field visit to Albania, where the presentation (and the supporting material) on ‘incremental cost’ was also found to be somewhat unclear, and not well understood by participants. As incremental cost is a centrally important aspect of GEF processes and procedures, this presentation should be straightforward and informative. Some other comments on presentations included the following:

- ◆ The *PowerPoint presentations* were found to be too ‘generic’ in some cases, and would have been enhanced by referring more directly to the country context in question, rather than being general in nature;
- ◆ On a few occasions the *film* presented was noted as being irrelevant in light of the limited time available for discussion and exchange of ideas, and because of its cultural reference to occidental approaches and values. It was suggested that it be updated and be more relevant to a global audience;

---

28 Country Evaluation Reports

- ◆ Some respondents mentioned the need to improve the communication *material related to the GEF's strategic approach*;
- ◆ One respondent suggested *bringing more project examples* to illustrate some issues. It was suggested that those issues should come from the resources people instead of the material.

The *delivery of presentations*, workshop structure and content were considered by some respondents as favoring a dialogue between participants in the CDW. A majority of participants were very highly appreciative of the practical group exercises and activities that were part of the Workshop, and this was a recurring point contained in the written comments from the Country Evaluation Reports. However, the majority of participants felt that there were not a sufficient number of practical exercises. This comment is supported by observations in the field. For example, one significant area for improvement noted from the CDW in Albania, is the need to have presentations, and a workshop format more generally, which facilitates the dialogue amongst the varied participants. This is key, especially considering that in Albania and other CDW countries, it was the first time various stakeholders were in the room together at the same time, and the opportunity for dialogue and enhanced communication between these stakeholders should not be missed. In light of these results, and in light of the CDW objective related to facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue in the context of the CDW, the evaluation team recommends an increase in the facilitation of, and of activities that are conducive to discussion and the sharing of information and experiences amongst diverse stakeholders.

In addition, data collected from Albania suggests that participants were more attentive and participatory during sessions where presenters were from their country. Although those SC, GEFSEC or IA members giving presentations on the GEF do indeed know the information very well, and did an excellent job presenting in the majority of cases, having an increased number of 'national' presenters may help with the capacity development and the transferring of knowledge at the national level.

The following additional comments related to the delivery of modules emerged from comments in the post-Workshop evaluations and should be taken into account to further the dialogue process during the workshop:

- ◆ There should be a reduction in the number of participants in working groups in order to further explore the topic discussed and presented during the workshop;
- ◆ It would be a good idea to employ professional facilitators in order to have a more constructive outcome from activities;
- ◆ There is a need for more time for the working group sessions;
- ◆ There is a need for more time to discuss the details of incremental cost.

To conclude, the presentations in the workshop were considered more than adequate for the participants involved. Participants to the workshops rated highly their quality and substance, and have learned from them. There may be a need, however, to increase the amount of interactive presentations and group activities, to facilitate overall dialogue and exchanges amongst participants, and between them and the CDW implementation partners. In addition, it may be worthwhile to consider increasing the number of 'national' presenters, and ensuring all presentations are fully contextually and nationally relevant.

**Recommendation:** *It is recommended that there be an increase in the overall facilitation of, and of activities that are conducive to, the dialogue and sharing of experiences amongst diverse stakeholders at these workshops.*

**Recommendation:** *It is recommended that there be an increase in presentations made by nationals at the Workshops (and therefore a decrease in presentations made by the SC, GEFSEC and IAs or*

*others), which will be conducive to higher attention and participation, and will also be a catalyst for the transfer of knowledge about the GEF and issues of national relevance related to the GEF.*

#### *Quality of the website*

Another intended output of the CDW project and process was the creation and constant updating of a website. CDW materials prepared by the program are made available on the CDW website. According to website statistics, these materials are regularly downloaded by interested parties worldwide. “Based on feedback from users, they are being used outside of CDW recipient countries to conduct workshops, seminars and training sessions on the GEF and related global environmental issues”<sup>29</sup>. The CDW process itself is one that focuses almost exclusively on drawing upon experiences and transferring knowledge. In addition to the workshops themselves as a vehicle for this, reports are prepared by the OFPs containing summaries of the CDW. They are available on the CDW website and are distributed nationally by the OFPs in some case. The PIR 2001 suggests that increasing use of the website for information dissemination among governments, NGO’s, the donor community, and the program partners, has proven to be cost effective and efficient, and provides transparency in overall implementation<sup>30</sup>. A high level of satisfaction with the website was found from data collected from the SC, GEFSEC and IA interviews. However, it should be noted that participants to the workshops tended to rate the clarity of the information presented on the website less positively when compared with the other respondent groups.

**Recommendations:** *Some recommendations for further website improvement include the following:*

- ◆ *There should be more visual effects, and*
- ◆ *There should be a section on impacts and implications, where recommendations of the workshops, feedback from participants, indicators of success, and success stories would be found.*
- ◆ *A virtual forum should be added to allow discussion and follow up on questions from the participants after the workshop. The forum could also be used as a means to ensure cross-fertilization and exchange of lessons between countries as well as to help sustain networking.*

## 4.6 Timeliness of outputs and activities

The CDW project was designed so as to complete 50 Workshops in 3 years in a variety of countries. As noted in the section on design, apart from the 6-month start-up period delay, the project appears to be on track globally. In terms of the scheduled delivery of workshops, it appears that the workshops were held on time and according to schedule in almost all cases, and that delays were occasional and due to changes in dates requested by the countries themselves. In terms of the scheduled delivery of the agenda for a given workshop, no significant delays or problems were found.

## 4.7 Cost-effectiveness

---

<sup>29</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Project Implementation Review (PIR) 2001, p. 13

<sup>30</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Project Implementation Review (PIR) 2001, p. 10-13

The original budget for the proposed project was to deliver about 50 national (and some regional) GEF CDW workshops.<sup>31</sup> It was noted on several occasions by the SC, GEFSEC and the IAs, that the CDW has been very cost-effective in achieving its mandate. Evidence of this cost-effectiveness is found in a budgetary surplus, which has allowed for the allocation of financial resources to 3 additional CDWs that are expected to be conducted in 2003. In addition, the CDW project has been extended by six months without additional financing. When respondents were asked if enough time and resources were provided to ensure the adequate planning of the workshops, varied views emerged. Local UNDP office respondents unanimously responded positively, while OFP respondents that were asked the same question were divided, half finding the time and resources adequate, and the other half, inadequate. Again, this may point out the varying capacity of OFPs to engage in the organization of such events, but may also be a reflection of varying country contexts. It is also the case that certain CDWs require more or less time and effort than others, depending on the role of the OFP and other players involved.

Cost-effectiveness also came up as an issue when dealing with regional CDW workshops. Three such workshops had taken place at the time this evaluation was conducted. Because of the significant transportation costs involved in conducting a regional workshop, the cost of holding such events is many times higher than the cost of national CDWs. In addition, these higher costs limit the variety of participants from each country, as well as the coverage by local media in the countries of the respective participants, thus producing a mitigated impact in terms of promoting in-country coordination, mainstreaming and sharing of information, three of the aims of the CDW process. That being said, it was found that in certain well-delineated instances, such higher costs are justified by the benefits to be reaped from such regional events. A key criterion for cost-effectiveness would be that the regional event is meant to discuss around a regional framework for collaboration, such as a regional strategy on climate change or biodiversity. In the absence of such common reference framework for discussion and action, the potential for productive and focused discussion, as well as for enhanced coordination has proven limited within the context of the objectives of the CDW.

#### 4.8 Cooperation among GEF partners during implementation

It was expected that the CDW implementation process would exemplify high levels of cooperation between GEF partners. Almost all respondents, UNDP local representatives and OFPs alike, agreed that this cooperation should be rated as either 'very adequate' or 'adequate'. This is related to coordination both prior and during the implementation of the workshop between the WCU, the SC, the GEFSEC, the IAs and the local UNDP office. The adequacy of coordination here refers in particular to:

- ◆ Invitations made to various participants,
- ◆ Logistical aspects of organization,
- ◆ Presenters and their presentations,
- ◆ Development of other contents, and
- ◆ Conference calls on the design of the workshop.

---

<sup>31</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Global Project, Multi-Focal Area, Project Document, 1999, p. 12

The inter-agency recipe has been successful due to the full commitment of all of the CDW partners. Teleconferences were systematically conducted with each inter-agency ‘team’ of resource persons prior to each CDW to ensure that a global GEF approach is taken for each workshop.<sup>32</sup> Some respondents noted that there were some instances of miscommunication amongst these partners, in particular during the early workshops. However, these were isolated cases. The apparent absence of these miscommunications later in the process reveals strength in learning lessons and improvement in coordinated delivery.

In terms of this dialogue and cooperation and its links to the national level actors, most of the respondents from the SC, GEFSEC, and the IAs found the dialogue process to be thorough, both before and during the CDW. The majority said, however, that the level and quality of dialogue and cooperation depended on the country’s OFP and its role in the government, the consultative structure of the country, and the general national cultural and political context. In general, the dialogue process prior to the CDW, especially between the GEF and its partners, was considered to be intensive and inclusive, and this reflects well on the efforts in communication and coordination of Workshop Coordination Unit and the SC.

In conclusion, it can be said that the overall cooperation, as well as communication and coordination, between GEF and its partners in CDW implementation has been a contributing factor to the success of the CDW project. In addition, the CDW process has contributed to the positive evolution of communication and coordination between these partners.

## **5. Project Impact Issues**

It was expected that the Country Dialogue Workshops, by the end of the project, would have:

- ◆ Educated a broad-based national audience about the GEF - its mission, strategy, policies and procedures;
- ◆ Promoted country level dialogue on needs and priorities, coordination and sharing of information, including best practise and lessons learned in protecting the global environment; and
- ◆ Provided practical information on how to access GEF resources and how to identify, prepare and implement GEF-financed activities.

This final section will examine the extent of achievement of the project’s above-mentioned objectives.

### **5.1 Educated a broad-based national audience about the GEF- its mission, strategy, policies and procedures**

A set of indicators was carefully identified in consultation with the CDW SC to establish the extent to which the first expected impact of the CDW has been achieved between 2000 and 2002<sup>33</sup>. The indicators include:

- ◆ Number and variety of participants attending the workshop
- ◆ Percentage of respondents able to provide examples of global environmental issues they learned about and some statement of GEF objectives

---

<sup>32</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Project Implementation Review (PIR) 2001, p. 10

<sup>33</sup> As noted in the methodology section, for a detailed discussion of the reasons that led to adjustments in the list of indicators to evaluate the impacts of the CDW project, please refer to the evaluation matrix provided in annex

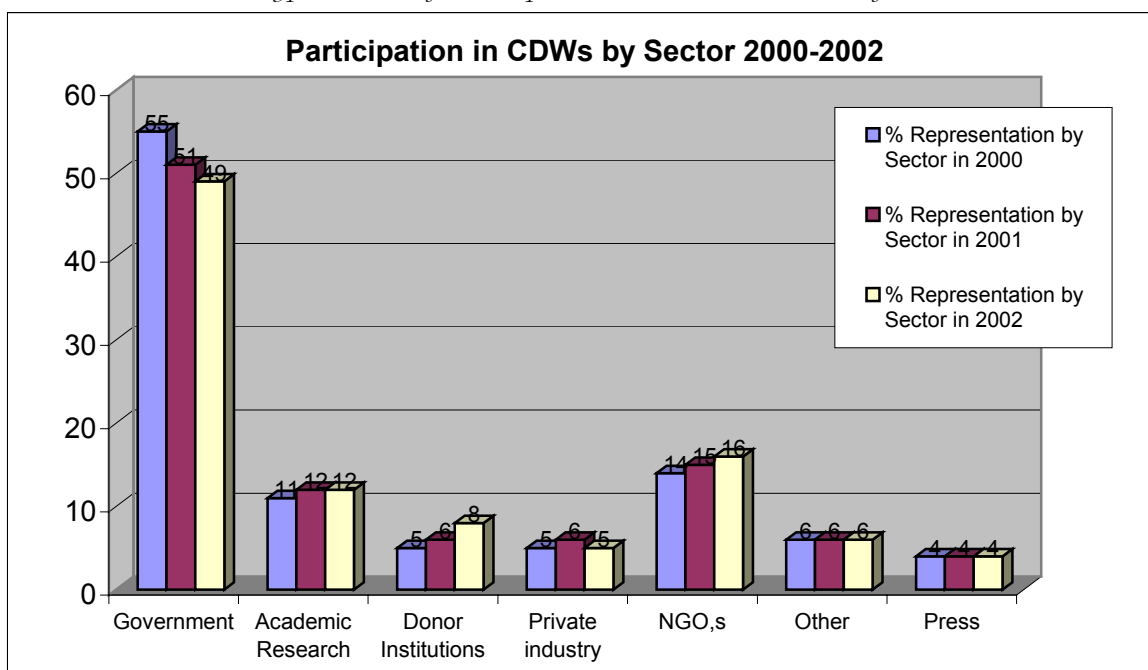
- ◆ Examples of increased media coverage during or after the workshop
- ◆ Examples of integration that can be directly related to the workshop
- ◆ Examples of commitment statements or actions on biodiversity and Climate Change that can be directly related to the workshop

### 5.1.1 Number and variety of participants attending the workshop

A review of the data shows that the average number of participants has been consistently high through the 3 years of the project with an average of around 90 participants per workshop<sup>34</sup>. The number has been even higher in some countries, like Albania, for example. The GEF has thus been successful in attracting a relatively large audience in the countries where the CDWs were conducted.

In terms of representation, based on the compilation of the detailed data provided by UNDP and depicted in the table below, the level of participation of the government sector in the CDW is significantly higher than the 5 other sectors represented at the workshop (academic and research, donor institutions, private sector, NGOs, press and others). Indeed, it represented around half of the overall representation at the workshops, and in the majority of cases, an even higher ratio.

*FIGURE 9: Type and level of sector representation to CDW conducted from 2000-2002*



However, one must point out that our data also indicates that there has been a conscious effort to strike a greater balance in participation, and this should be noted. The reduction in overall government representation from 57% two years ago to 48% at present (depicted in the table above) is one illustration of the impacts of that effort. The participation of many representatives from provincial level organizations, which came out of our review of participants list, should also be specifically noted as positive element.

<sup>34</sup> Review of participants lists to the various CDWs

This awareness of the need to strive for a balance in representation is visible in the discussions that took place amongst the steering committee<sup>35</sup> and from the evolving composition of the invitation lists to the workshop where larger numbers of participants from other sectors were approached<sup>36</sup>. In addition, interviews with SC members, the GEFSEC, and IAs, reveal the strong commitment to find this better balance, but also point to the limited control CDW management has on ensuring this participation beyond making sure that potential participants from different sectors are identified and invited, and that a dialogue is established with the government to stress the importance of a multi-stakeholder representation. Therefore, although multi-sectoral representation represents an area wherein there is room for further improvement, this is not necessarily a negative reflection on the implementation team.

It goes without saying that the significant role and involvement of the government in national and global environment issues partly accounts for the higher participation of the government in CDWs. That being said, numerous participants have expressed their interest in seeing more NGO and private sector representation in the upcoming CDWs. Several OFP, UNDP local office, and participant respondents to our review have pointed out that limited NGO financial resources for transport and accommodation may have restrained their participation to the CDW. This data is contradicted by interviews done with CDW management, wherein it was stated that resources are provided to ensure that this is not an impediment to participation. It should be mentioned that there has been a systematic relationship cultivated between the CDW Program and the GEF-NGO network. The CDW Management sent draft agendas, lists of participants, and contact information to the GEF-NGO network in advance of the workshops and encouraged the network to contact OFPs should they have any questions comments, or additional recommendations for NGO participation in the CDWs. As for the private sector, suggestions revolved around the need to devise a workshop focus that would be of better relevance to their specific interests. Yet, it is clear more efforts are needed overall, by the project implementation team and the national level partners to try to secure higher participation from the private sector and NGOs as well.

The low donor participation is also noticeable from the graph provided and has indeed been commented upon by some interviewees, and by IAs in particular, who see their participation as key to favour a more coordinated approach to global environmental issues at the country level. From the evaluator's perspective, this appears particularly crucial within the context of enhanced leveraging effects of GEF funding sought after within the context of limited GEF resources.

It is clear that overall participation in the CDWs has been successful throughout implementation. It is however, important to ensure that the participation of NGOs, the private sector and donors be enhanced to have more balanced participation, and CDW impact overall.

**Recommendations:** *In light of this context, it is recommended that CDW management more closely investigate the appropriateness of the CDW modalities for:*

- ◆ *raising the interest of civil society (NGOs) and the private sector in the Workshop through more targeted sessions within the context of the CDW, and greater efforts to ensure their participation overall in CDW preparation;*
- ◆ *eliciting other and multiple donor participation to the event.*

---

<sup>35</sup> Country Dialogue Workshop Programme, Steering Committee Meeting 4, Minutes, July 13th 2000, p. 2

<sup>36</sup> Based on the review of the invitation list to the CDW

### *5.1.2 Number of persons and percentage of respondents able to provide examples of global environmental issues they learned about and some statement of GEF objectives*

More than half of the respondents to the evaluation questionnaire were able to provide two or three examples of global environmental issues and/or aspects of the GEF they had learned about at workshop. More examples of learning related to aspects of the GEF than to global environmental issues were listed, which seems to be in accordance with the planned focus of the CDW. It should be mentioned that one of the greatest strengths of the CDWs is the ability of the project to transfer basic knowledge about the GEF to participants in the Workshops. A few OFPs, participants to the workshop, and local UNDP office respondents were not able to provide examples of issues they had learned about, but in the great majority of cases this was because they argued they already possessed considerable knowledge of global environmental issues and the GEF.

Examples of global environmental issues participants had learned about included: biodiversity, conservation, Persistent Organic Pollutants, climate change, GHG emissions, solid waste management, renewable energy, international waters, agricultural problems, and global environmental issues as they related to matters concerning family and women. It is clear that the CDWs have been overwhelmingly successful in educating their audiences on global environmental challenges and benefits.

Examples of knowledge acquired regarding the GEF included among others: GEF mission and objectives, operational programs and procedures, knowledge on GEF activities and ways of accessing it, incremental cost reasoning, global benefits and co-financing, knowledge on best practices, role of GEF in thematic focal areas, support to country driven activities, small grant programmes, as well as inter-relations between conventions. Almost all data suggests that participants to the workshop have gained much knowledge on the GEF and its mission, policies and procedures and more. Albania can be cited as a key example wherein knowledge transfer was a central success in the workshop. In this particular case, some of the participants began the workshop “without knowing what the 3 letters stood for<sup>37</sup>”, and left the workshop with a clear understanding of what the GEF was, and a better understanding of the environmental challenges that the organization addresses.

One of the greatest successes of the CDWs has been the transferring and raising of knowledge in two primary areas:

- ◆ Global environmental challenges and benefits;
- ◆ GEF mission, policies, strategies, OPs and general knowledge on GEF activities (especially related global conventions).

### *5.1.3 Increased media coverage during or after the workshop*

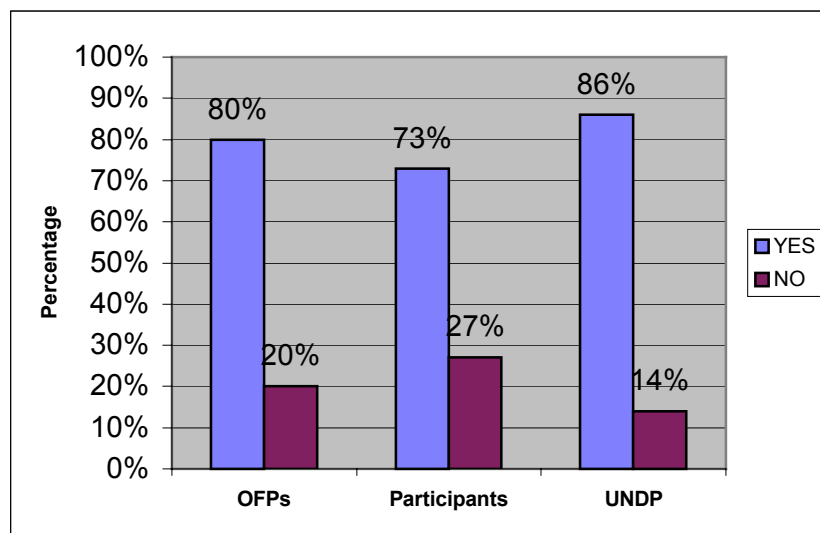
The great majority of respondents, whether from UNDP local offices, OFPs or other participants to the workshops, pointed out to some form of media coverage on global environmental issues related to the CDW during or after the workshop, both in the printed and the electronic media, and at both the national and in some cases local levels. Many press articles were reported following the workshops from the majority of CDW countries. According to OFPs and participants who responded to our survey, this was the case namely in the Philippines, Cambodia, Bulgaria, Lebanon, Burkina Faso, Uganda, Dominica, and Barbados. Furthermore, the event was covered by national television in the South-Pacific Islands and in Vietnam. A field mission in Albania observed high coverage of the CDW by the media, during the CDW itself. There were many television stations on site, covering opening addresses and certain presentations, and doing interviews with key stakeholders in the margins of the meetings. Press interviews with some participants were also noted during the CDW in Lebanon. A respondent also mentioned radio coverage in one instance.

---

<sup>37</sup> Interviewee in Albania, from the government. Interviewees alluded to this commentary from the NGO sector as well.

According to UNDP local office representatives in two countries, as well as the OFP in one country, the national television and/or journalists were invited to the CDW opening speech and had several opportunities to themselves take part in the workshop activities.

*FIGURE 10: Are you aware of any media coverage on global environmental issues that took place in your host country during or after the CDW?*



Wide-ranging issues were covered in the media during and following the workshop, including, in no particular order:

- ◆ Biodiversity, climate change and desertification;
- ◆ New opportunities for funding environmental protection and sustainable development;
- ◆ The role of the GEF and international institutions in improving the quality of the environment in the country;
- ◆ Funding and organization of the workshop by the GEF and UNDP;
- ◆ Launching of reports, and;
- ◆ How the country could benefit from the GEF programme.

News clippings reviewed from various local printed media in countries where workshops were held also corroborate the result from the survey of participants.<sup>38</sup>

The evaluation team has not been in a position to estimate the coverage of the media, but indications, given the national scope of many of the media sources, are that a wide audience was reached through such coverage. More than 14 press clipping from different countries were collected and did reveal an interest in communicating key issues related to global environment to regional and national audiences. What is unclear is whether or not this process has induced more interest on the global issues in the media or in society at large once the workshop was completed. This, obviously, is, in any case, dependent on many other factors outside the scope of the CDW project as it was designed, and some of these are touched upon later in this section.

---

<sup>38</sup> Press clippings from the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Pakistan, South Africa, Algérie, Cambodia, Ile Maurice, Lebanon, Bhutan, Tunisia, Kathmandu, Bangladesh, and Kazakhstan.

#### *5.1.4 Examples of integration into national sustainable development policies that can be directly related to the workshop*

The majority of IAs, GEFSEC, and SC members interviewed were aware of actions taken in the host countries to increase the integration of global environmental issues into national sustainable development policies. This response was also echoed by responses from OFPs and participant respondents to the survey conducted. Indeed, when OFPs were asked as to whether or not they were aware of actions that were taken in their country to increase the integration of global environmental issues into national sustainable development policies as a result of the workshop, 64 % responded positively. Some examples of integration brought forth by OFPs included the following:

- ◆ *In the Philippines:* The national environmental action plan was updated;
- ◆ *In Uganda:* The country engaged in the CDI National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA) process;
- ◆ *In Vietnam:* The national strategy for environmental protection (2001-2010) was developed, as well as the 5 year Environmental Action Plan (2001-2005).

However, it should be pointed out that examples brought forth suggest that there may be a need to have the issue of mainstreaming more central and upfront in the CDW implementation process, in order to ensure further impact in terms of integration of global environmental issues into national sustainable development planning. Indeed, respondents have highlighted key actions and commitments that have emerged as a result of the workshops, yet these are primarily related to addressing one convention and do not necessarily reflect this needed integration into national policies and planning.

Although some broad links can be made between these coordination, strategy, or policy integration activities and the CDW workshop, one should not as such see in this finding a direct relationship. In this particular case, the CDW should be seen as part of the bigger picture of coordination efforts conducted within the country, as well as between the country and the GEF and its implementing agencies. The CDW could be seen as one event that has contributed to this process and gave it impetus.

#### *5.1.5 Examples of commitment statements or actions on biodiversity and climate change that can be directly related to the workshop*

The CDW has been quite successful also in having a positive effect on commitment statements or actions on biodiversity and climate change in countries that have received workshops. Here again, a number of examples of commitment statements or actions were provided by the respondents and include:

- ◆ *In Bulgaria:* The country went ahead with the ratification of the climate change convention;
- ◆ *In Albania:* A Proposal on biodiversity received financial support from the GEF;
- ◆ *In Burkina Faso:* Specific Ministry of Environment requests for proposals and projects on biodiversity and climate change were made;
- ◆ *In Bangladesh:* Commitments were made to expedite the formulation of the national action plans on biodiversity and climate change;
- ◆ *In Cambodia:* The workshop proceedings included a set of recommendations concerning the GEF country strategy. A number of initiatives /proposals concerning biodiversity and climate change were discussed, and some of them are currently in preparation;
- ◆ *In Dominica:* A conference highlighting some aspects of the global conventions was organized following the workshop;

- ◆ *In Lebanon:* The CDW helped initiate the preparation of a biodiversity conservation project in southern Lebanon, as well as the preparation of a GHG emission reduction initiative in the transport sector;
- ◆ *In the Philippines:* The preparation of the national report on biodiversity was addressed at the workshop;
- ◆ *In Russia:* The biodiversity and conservation strategy, as well as the energy strategy, were approved;
- ◆ *In Vietnam:* Guidelines were developed for a GEF project; the Capacity Development Initiative was push forward through the NCSA process; national action plans for climate change and biodiversity were prepared; and the GEF Strategy was developed, including clear targets for GEF support.

A success of the CDWs has been their ability to act as a general catalyst in the creation of national GEF committees, and being part of a positive process whereby more countries have taken more steps to ensure a more integrated approach to development (and the environment), with particular emphasis on the issues of biodiversity and climate change.

## 5.2 Promoted country level dialogue on needs and priorities, coordination and sharing of information, including best practise and lessons learned in protecting the global environment

A second impact expected from the CDW project was the promotion of a country level dialogue related to the global environment. A set of indicators was here as well carefully identified in consultation with the GEF to establish the extent to which this second impact has materialized between 2000 and 2002. The indicators include:

- ◆ Number and variety of participants attending the workshop;
- ◆ Example of knowledge acquired by focal points and his/her enhanced role;
- ◆ Examples of coordination commitments and that can clearly be traced back to the workshop, including between IAs and with other donors;
- ◆ Some replication of the workshop format by OFP after the event;
- ◆ Examples of follow-up activities following the Workshop, and;
- ◆ New networking sustained;

### 5.2.1 *Number and variety of participants attending workshops*

Findings in relation to this indicator were already reviewed in the previous section. Those findings are relevant to this impact level objective as well, as one of the crucial issues is to ensure that adequate participation in order to ensure a multi-stakeholder 'country level dialogue' that would be broad enough and inclusive of a variety of national stakeholders.

Without repeating the evidence already provided, it can be said that indeed various stakeholder groups were represented at the workshops in general, but that further efforts are required to ensure better representation from NGOs and the private sector. In addition, a review of the participants' lists to the CDWs shows the need for an increased effort to get more participation at the workshop from line ministries, such as economic sector ministries. What is meant here is those line ministries that go beyond the typical environmentally

related sector representation. A true national level dialogue on the implementation of the global conventions and coordination on national priorities can only happen with the involvement of these other crucial national actors and civil society as well as the private sector.

It must also be pointed out that the CDW was clearly a positive endeavour in promoting a national dialogue as our survey revealed that in some cases, this was the first time that certain national actors sat and discussed together. A good example is that of Russia. The Russia workshop participant evaluations<sup>39</sup> mentioned that, for the first time ever in Russia, a single audience included both contractors of ongoing projects, high-ranking officials in charge of the implementation of those projects, and the general public that should be informed on the GEF's priorities. For them, the Workshop provided an opportunity for a dialogue where representatives from those various groups (including the IAs and the GEF), could freely exchange opinions, discuss the lessons learned and clarify all unclear issues.

Similarly, in Albania, the CDW provided a first opportunity for various and diverse stakeholders, from different sectors, yet all related to the Environment, to get together. This kind of finding can be considered a major success of the CDW.

***Recommendation: It is recommended that the project implementation team place emphasis on the promotion of dialogue amongst diverse national stakeholders related to the environment. This should be done both in terms of ensuring high representation from diverse sectors (including among others energy, transport, agriculture and forestry sectors), and also through a facilitation of participation and dialogue during the Workshops themselves, as it is a rare and important opportunity not to be missed.***

#### *5.2.2 Examples of knowledge acquired by Focal Points and his/ her enhanced role*

As mentioned in the CDW project document, the GEF Operational Focal Points, which are intended to be key players in GEF project identification, preparation and implementation process and the GEF awareness effort, needed to be enabled to be more effective advocates for GEF issues and activities in their countries. Such a capacity, it was argued, would enhance the quantity and quality of national input to the GEF's project and outreach activities<sup>40</sup>.

Indeed, according to the *Good Practices: Country Coordination & GEF Manual*<sup>41</sup>, in most cases, the OFP is the center of the coordination among governmental and non-governmental agencies, institutes, and the public in relation to the global environment (and the GEF). The OFP must also coordinate full stakeholder participation, including authorities at the regional and local levels, as well as the private sector, always with a close working relationship with the environment and other specialized and technical ministries.

The evaluation team asked for the perception of the various groups surveyed regarding how the CDW had contributed to enhancing this role for the OFP. The majority of OFP and UNDP local representative respondents believed (88% for UNDP and 82% for OFPs) that the CDW process in their country had indeed strengthened the OFP capacity. This was supported by findings from the field in Albania, as the OFP can be considered to have become knowledgeable of the GEF and its related activities, and its capacity was enhanced in terms of being a central figure in national coordination on environment and a key player in facilitating the needed multi-stakeholder national dialogue in these key areas. Different capacities, in line with the expected role of the OFP, have been strengthened, and respondents mentioned the following:

---

<sup>39</sup> Country Evaluation Reports, Russia

<sup>40</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Global Project, Multi-Focal Area, Project Document, p. 6

<sup>41</sup> Global Environment Facility, Good practices: Country coordination & GEF, Jan. 2001, p. 1-2

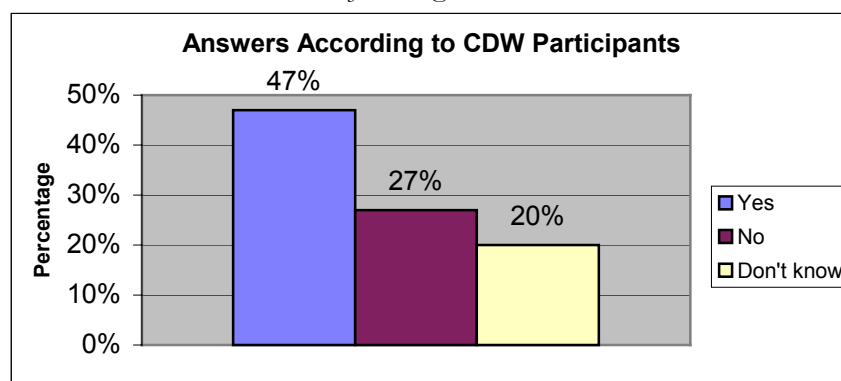
- ◆ Knowledge of the needs and views of stakeholders regarding GEF projects and of new complementary projects;
- ◆ Coordination capacity (synergies between national priorities and issues of global significance);
- ◆ Knowledge of GEF methods and processes;
- ◆ Institutional/networking capacity (through the creation of national GEF committee) to assist in overview and selection of requests for GEF support;
- ◆ Capacity to advise national stakeholders on GEF mechanisms, operations and eligibility criteria in relation to specific project ideas;
- ◆ Better capacity to advocate global environmental issues in regional and sub-regional fora.
- ◆ Development of crucial relations between the GEF and participating countries;
- ◆ Advancing commitments to expedite the formulation of the National Action Plan on Bio-diversity, as well as on Climate Change, in a few cases, and;
- ◆ Preparation of different types of projects: to reduce GHG emissions from the transportation sector, for the POPs phase-out, for biosafety, etc.

Similarly, about half of the interviewed representatives of the GEFSEC, the IAs and the SC, considered that the GEF OFP was more effective in advocating global environmental issues after the workshop. Some of the examples provided included:

- ◆ *In Vietnam*, a higher sense of commitment and capacity of the OFP in advocating global environmental issues was perceived;
- ◆ *In Cambodia*, since the CDW, there is a more apparent understanding of the OFP's co-ordination function. Priority setting on global issues has increased.
- ◆ *In South Africa*, the OFP learned by listening carefully to a variety of actors involved.

However, it must be pointed out that a sizeable number of interviewees from the GEFSEC, the SC and the IAs felt that the OFP capacity had not been significantly improved by the workshops. Responses from participants to the workshops also reflect this mixed review of enhanced OFP capacity as a result of the Workshop. When they were asked if they considered that the GEF OFP was more effective in advocating global environmental issues after the CDW, participants interviewed had differing views. The graph below presents a snap shot of their perception on this issue:

*FIGURE 11: Do you consider the GEF Operational Focal Point more effective in advocating global environmental issues following the CDW?*



Some of these workshop participants pointed out to the need to further strengthen the OFPs to make them effective in their important role. The participants' workshop evaluation reports reviewed tended to also support this view of OFP capacity as a result of the Workshops. For instance, in Vietnam, it was suggested that the GEF OFP needed to be further supported to improve its GEF project proposal development, coordination, review and monitoring capacity<sup>42</sup>. Some other country respondents made similar comments.

While overall the results of the survey acknowledge a certain degree of success in building the OFP capacity, and making it more effective in carrying out its role, the majority of respondents also support the view that a two-day event can hardly be seen as sufficient to build this capacity to a level that provides for an effective coordination role. It is clear that the CDW should be seen through the broader context of a longer term process of capacity building, as is also now explicitly acknowledged by the CDW steering committee<sup>43</sup>. In the view of the evaluation team, this should be furthered, if the CDW effort is to be extended to create full synergies with other efforts at developing the capacity of the OFPs.

**Recommendation: *It is recommended that a new phase of CDW recognize the need for longer term and sustained efforts at building the capacity of the OFP in order to allow them to effectively carry on their mandate and be better advocate for coordinated efforts to address global environmental issues. In that respect, the CDW should be designed as one element of a broader effort to build OFP capacity, which would effectively link with other initiatives such as the 'Support to OFP' initiative from the GEF.***

### *5.2.3 Some replication of the workshop format by OFP after the event*

A good measure of the impact of the CDWs in terms of promoting country level dialogue on needs and priorities and the further coordination and sharing of information, is to investigate the level of replication of CDW format activities by the OFP after the workshop. The data collected for this evaluation suggests that there has been some significant replication of Workshop activities by OFPs after the CDW. Some examples of activities and efforts promoted by the OFPs after the CDW, which were provided by various respondents to our survey included the following:

- ◆ A donor coordination gathering organized by OFPs *in Bulgaria* was held, where government priorities were discussed;
- ◆ *In Malawi*, a National Steering Committee was organized by the OFP.
- ◆ OFPs helped coordinate a UNDP workshop on a Wetland project on the Mekong River *in Vietnam*.

### *5.2.4 Examples of coordination commitments and /or activities that can clearly be traced back to the workshop including between LAs and with other donors*

As early as 2001, the CDW could point out to indices of success in promoting coordination at the national level, as a result of various Workshops. Indeed, the 2001 PIR noted that the program had been the catalyst of changes in GEF and IA strategies and national level coordination and action in at least two countries - South Africa and Vietnam - where a new approach was generated as a result of the workshops through follow-up actions taken by the GEF partners<sup>44</sup>.

During the course of the present evaluation, OFPs and local UNDP office representatives identified various examples of coordination commitments/activities as a result of the workshop:

---

<sup>42</sup> Participant Evaluation, Vietnam CDW, 2000

<sup>43</sup> GEF Country Dialogue Workshops Programme steering committee 8, draft minutes, September 5th, 20002

<sup>44</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, Project Implementation Review (PIR) 2001, p. 11

- ◆ *Burkina Faso* had seen the creation of a GEF national committee to ensure a broader multi-stakeholder decision making process, after the CDW;
- ◆ In *Ecuador* there was a proposal prepared for such a GEF national committees, following the workshop;
- ◆ In *Malawi*, the CDW contributed to the creation of the GEF national committee;
- ◆ In *Kazakhstan*, a GEF committee was created, following the CDW;
- ◆ *Uganda* saw the more frequent meeting of the GEF steering committee for project reviews, after the CDW, and;
- ◆ *Vietnam* had seen the creation of the regional Wetland Project for Mekong River Basin and National coordination activities were being pursued. *Vietnam* now has a national GEF strategy following the CDW, as well as Climate Change and Biodiversity National Action Plans<sup>45</sup>.

Even though it was considered unclear for some, most of the GEFSEC, SC and IA representatives interviewed considered the CDW as instrumental in furthering and increasing coordination between IAs and the national government, among IAs, and with other donors at the country level. It was mentioned that the Workshops improved the communication and facilitated an enhanced coordination process. In Russia, for example, the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and the Implementing Agencies, through the CDW forum, agreed on the need for closer interaction and efficient coordination of GEF projects at the national level in line with current national priorities<sup>46</sup>. SC, GEFSEC, and IA respondents said that the CDW process favoured enhanced consultation and that it often offered a key venue for sitting around and discussing important issues in an informal way. Most agreed that the consultation process and the conduct of the CDW led to more interaction and better knowledge of other stakeholders' perspective on issues related to global environment as well. Other comments were also raised:

- ◆ Discussions, which took place between UNDP and the World Bank in *Bulgaria* on pipeline projects and prospects for complementarity, can be considered crucial in the context of a difficult period in terms of GEF financing;
- ◆ In *Lebanon*, bilateral and multilateral (IA) coordination was considered higher after workshop;
- ◆ In *the Philippines*, the understanding of GEF and IA coordination and complementarity potential was an eye-opener for the Dutch, and;
- ◆ CDW was considered instrumental to increase coordination in *Vietnam*, where roles of IA s were consider clearer as a result of the Workshop.

Data suggests that in general, the CDWs offer an opportunity for enhancing coordination and complementarity overall, as a forum is created wherein issues can be brought to light concerning overlap, duplication and the potential for enhanced impact overall. For example, a few respondents noted that certain IA relationships, like between UNDP and the World Bank, and have been improved through the Workshops. It was also stated that the overall process of SC coordination has created a bond and stronger coordination amongst GEF IAs.

---

<sup>45</sup> Findings from SC and IA interviews

<sup>46</sup> Country Project Evaluations, Russia

The majority, or 70% of local UNDP office representatives viewed the CDW as a key element in increasing cooperation between IAs and environmental donors. Working together in the design and delivery of the Workshops has resulted in some cases of increased cooperation between IAs, especially at the country level, and also with various nationally relevant stakeholders related to environmental issues in some countries. This was probably the case for Albania as a result of the CDW, as the field mission observed increased and enhanced linkages between donors active in the country and closer linkages between the IAs and relevant national players for sustained partnership in environment through the CDW forum<sup>47</sup>. Other references were made to increased coordination between UNDP and the World Bank as they kept each other better informed about new GEF proposals and their elaboration, in a few countries.

Despite a low level of awareness of OFPs on the issue of coordination, there are some indications that the CDW has indeed promoted coordination at the national level and between IAs. Less evidence exist of increased coordination with other donors and this might be an area that needs further attention by promoting further involvement of donors in the CDW dialogue process, as earlier recommended in this report.

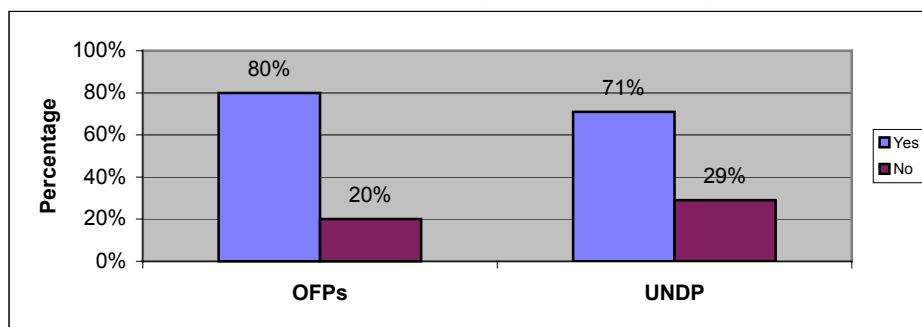
**Recommendation:** *It is recommended that the CDW further promote the involvement of other donors through the CDW dialogue forum and process. The CDWs should continue to focus on enhancing IA coordination through the Workshops.*

#### 5.2.5 Follow-up activities

The existence of follow up activities can be an indicator of two things: the commitment of the various actors to a sustained process of dialogue and coordination at the country level; and, the increased capacity of the OFP in its coordination function.

A majority of OFP and local UNDP office respondents could indeed identify follow up activities. The other participants to the workshop which were surveyed were, however, not generally aware of such follow-up activities. Surveys of country evaluation reports that also cover the issues of various types of participants reveal that improvements related to follow up activities are needed. This might be an indication that follow up could benefit from being more inclusive and not be restrained to a small group of key players. This seems to be further supported by the fact that while a majority of OFPs were satisfied with the follow up activities, local UNDP office respondents were generally not, and these respondents offer another perspective on follow-up activities in a given country.

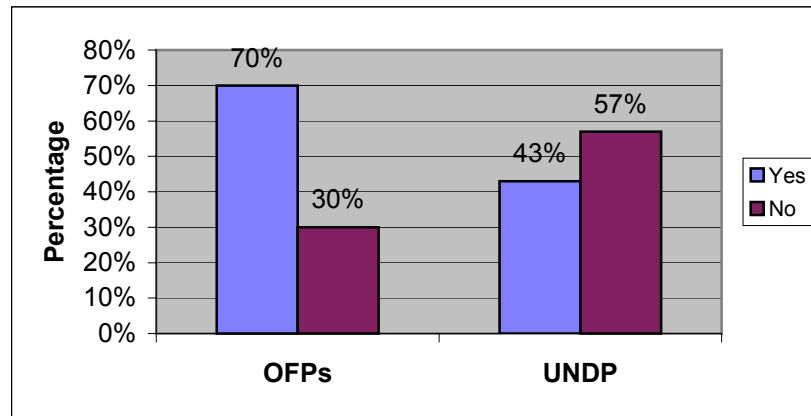
FIGURE 12: *Are you aware of any follow-up activities that took place after the CDW?*



---

<sup>47</sup> In Albania, a multi-donor meeting took place following the CDW, with many relevant national stakeholders related to the environment, and this facilitated good discussion and enhanced coordination for environmental actions at the national level. The CDW acted as a catalyst to have many important players together in the same room.

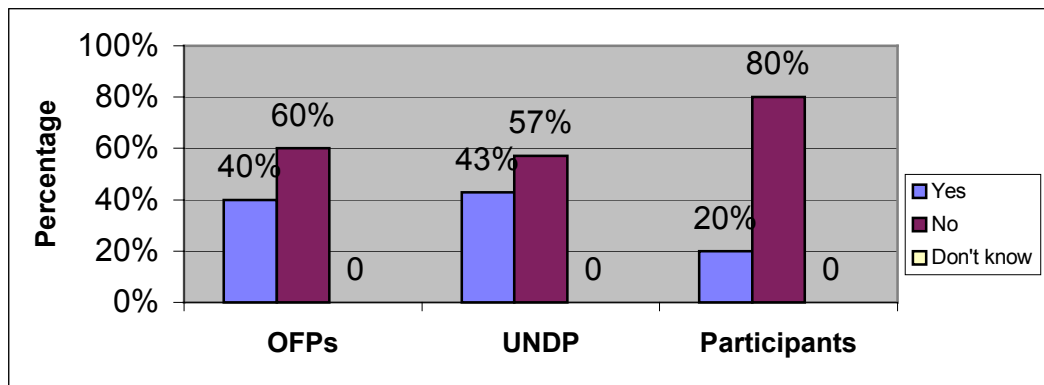
FIGURE 13: Are you satisfied with the follow-up activities?



A majority of GEFSEC, SC, and IA representatives were also aware of some form of follow-up coordination activities involving some CDW partners after the workshops. Some of the key examples provided in the previous sections of this report will not be repeated here.

The majority of the OFPs, local UNDP representatives, workshop participants as well as the GEFSEC, SC, and IA representatives interviewed, were not aware of any other similar events held in a given country following the CDW.

FIGURE 14: Are you aware of another event with similar focus to that of the CDW that has taken place since the initial workshop in your country?



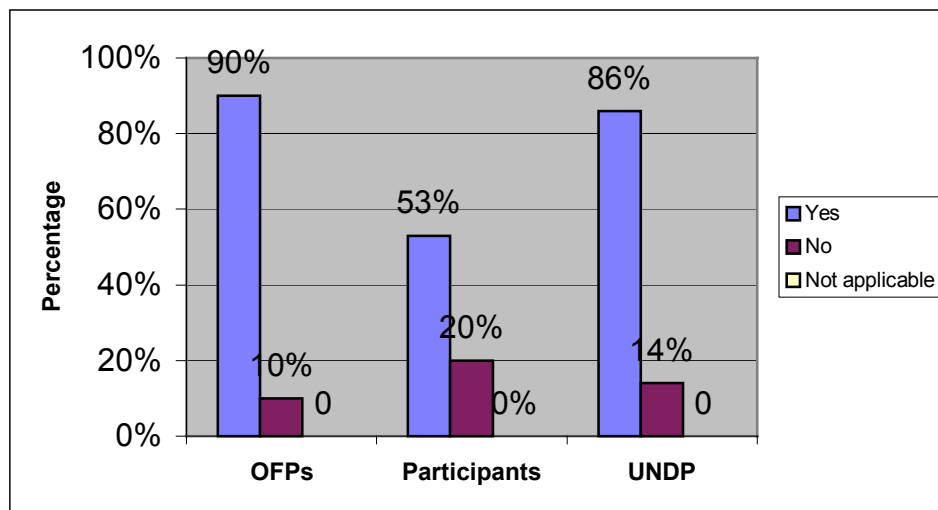
It is thus fair to say that the CDW led in a number of cases to some form of follow up activities, although in general not as inclusive as the CDW process. The data suggests that more efforts have in fact to be put into sustaining a comprehensive dialogue at the national level.

**Recommendation:** *It is recommended that follow-up activities should be inserted in the design of the CDW, to sustain and further enhanced coordination and an inclusive dialogue amongst IAs and national stakeholders.*

#### 5.2.6 New networking sustained

Formal and informal networking can also be considered as a crucial tool in furthering coordination and dialogue, and is therefore an important indicator to investigate to evaluate impacts of the CDW. As the graph below highlights, the vast majority of participants, OFPs and local UNDP office representatives mentioned that many networks of contacts they developed or that were reinforced during the CDW were maintained after the event.

FIGURE 15: Have you sustained some of the contacts you have developed at the CDW?



Examples of sustained networks and networking were provided by OFPs, and include the following:

- ◆ New partnerships and projects with and amongst *Russian* NGOs have sustained;
- ◆ Contacts and discussions with municipalities *in Bulgaria* has been reported to have sustained;
- ◆ Telephone exchanges have been reported as having taken place with CDW participants, as follow-up to the *Burkina Faso* CDW;
- ◆ Contacts made during the Small Grants Program workshop and during NCSAs preparation have been reported to have been sustained *in Lebanon*;
- ◆ *In Ecuador*, there has been a sustained network of NGOs involved in coastal and maritime issues that want to present projects in coastal and marine resources, and a sustained network on biologic trading (Bio-commercial), as well as a sustained network on private forests (La Fundacion Malecom 2000).

These findings are corroborated by the interviews with the GEFSEC, SC, and IAs, wherein some concrete examples of sustained networks were provided:

- ◆ *In Cuba*, the CDW has led to a better broader networking between ministries and better cross-sectoral coordination overall.
- ◆ *In South Africa*, the CDW led to a better networking among IAs;
- ◆ *In Russia*, participants to the CDW have remained in touch on specific issues (such as energy efficiency);

The data thus suggests that networking, and sustained contact, is indeed a successful aspect of the workshop process.

### 5.3. Provided practical information on how to access GEF resources and how to identify, prepare and implement GEF-financed activities

An important objective of the CDW project was to provide practical information on the GEF to countries. A set of indicators was carefully identified in consultation with the GEF and the SC to establish the extent to which this third 'impact level objective' had actually been fulfilled between 2000 and 2002. The indicators included:

- ◆ The increased knowledge of GEF eligibility criteria;
- ◆ Examples of use made of workshop material after the event, and;
- ◆ Examples of improved contribution to GEF project design, preparation or implementation by participants to the workshop;

#### *5.3.1 Increased knowledge of GEF eligibility criteria*

All OFPs agreed that the CDW information on how to access GEF resources and how to identify, prepare and implement GEF projects was most useful. This can be considered a success of the CDWs overall, as they have succeeded in transferring knowledge on these matters. In the Pacific Islands, for example, the information available made requirements and regulations clearer to those who attended the Workshops. In Albania, some felt that the Workshop clarified how to start action. The information transferred through the Workshops also allowed OFPs from Lebanon, Vietnam and Russia to guide interested stakeholders in negotiations, as well as in the preparation and implementation of GEF projects.

The responses from CDW participants to our survey were similar, noting that knowledge gained in terms of GEF eligibility criteria and more, can be considered strength of the Workshops. One exception to this comes from one government respondent, who noted that the CDW lacked means of identification, preparation and implementation of GEF activities. This view was echoed by others as well, as a NGO respondent to the questionnaire thought that information presented did not help.

Along similar lines, local UNDP office responses to this issue were also generally positive, and these respondents felt that the CDW helped to enhance knowledge about the GEF eligibility criteria and more. For example, one respondent noted that the information transmitted through the workshops helped raise awareness amongst national stakeholders, and also helped to facilitate a negotiation process on particular initiatives related to the GEF.

#### *5.3.2 Use made of workshop material after the event*

A measure of how practical and useful the information presented and distributed on the GEF was, can be traced to the use made of this material after the Workshops. The respondents gave many examples for their subsequent use of material provided for during the workshop, and some of these are found below:

- ◆ Material was used to identify GEF project opportunities;
- ◆ Material was considered helpful and useful in the preparation and implementation of many GEF projects;
- ◆ Material was key in the development of concept papers, and;
- ◆ Material helped with the analysis of global benefits.

### *5.3.3 Examples of improved contributions to GEF projects design, preparation or implementation by participants to workshop*

The analysis of evaluations from the Workshops shows that the majority of participants have been able to get answers to many of their questions related to GEF projects, as well as having acquired significant new knowledge and skills with regard to all stages of the GEF project cycle. Data from the GEFSEC, SC, and IA interviews also tend to suggest that in a number of instances, project ideas discussed at the workshop led to the development afterwards of actual project proposals. Some examples of enhanced knowledge and improved contributions to GEF project design and implementation, brought forth by participants in these evaluations and by various respondents to our survey are found below, and corroborated this assessment:

- ◆ *In Algeria:* The UNDP Country Office respondent mentioned that there was an increase in the number and quality of proposals and projects related to Climate Change, Forest and Mountainous zones, and Desertification, as a direct result of the CDW;
- ◆ *In Barbados:* Knowledge and ideas of how the private sector could participate in GEF projects has been enhanced and discussed;
- ◆ *In Bulgaria:* The OFP pointed to the Small Grants Programs for NGOs as a direct result of the Workshop, and as evidence of enhanced knowledge concerning GEF projects;
- ◆ *In Burkina Faso:* The OFP affirmed that important knowledge was gained as a result of the CDW there, including enhanced knowledge of managing GEF projects and the GEF project cycle, the principle of incremental costs, and the general opportunities which are present in the area of GEF intervention in the country. The UNDP Country Office in the country also suggested that the CDW facilitated a process of enhanced knowledge of GEF project cycles and their implementation;
- ◆ *In Cuba:* Very important information and knowledge was acquired. The materials provided contained crucial information on the GEF and was found to be very useful;
- ◆ *In Ecuador:* The OFP noted that the CDW helped enhance knowledge of the operational context (including variability and changes), which exist in the GEF project cycle and implementation. In addition, issues related to incremental costs, co-financing, and general funding mechanisms, was also made clearer;
- ◆ *In Lebanon:* The OFP pointed out that the country now has enhanced knowledge of preparation of GEF concept papers, issues related to incremental costs, and general GEF co-financing mechanisms. The UNDP Country Office also believed that the CDW was successful in raising the awareness of national stakeholders and in facilitating a process of discussing the eligibility of project ideas and the integration of ideas with national priorities;
- ◆ *In the Philippines:* The OFP correlated new operations and programs of the GEF, such as sustainable transports and integrated ecosystems programs, to the CDW in the country;
- ◆ *In South Africa:* Input from GEF and its IAs (UNDP, World Bank, and UNEP), rounded out respondents' knowledge of the GEF very well;
- ◆ *In Uganda:* The OFP pointed to enhanced knowledge of issues related to sustainability and replicability of GEF projects, GEF priority areas, and the role of STAP, as a result of the Workshops, and;
- ◆ *In Uzbekistan:* As a result of the workshop, the participants have become equipped with knowledge about the GEF structure and operational principles, as well as focal areas and operational programs, and project eligibility and selection criteria. GEF requirements for project design and procedure to submit proposals were studied on specific cases.

Overall then, it is clear from the review of the progress of the CDW undertaken with respect to increased knowledge of GEF eligibility criteria, use made of workshop material after the workshop and examples of improved contributions to GEF project design, preparation or implementation by participants that the CDW has been successful in achieving its third objective, namely: providing practical information on how to access GEF resources and how to identify, prepare and implement GEF-financed activities.

However, it is also clear that as the GEF context evolves, this third aim of the workshop will have (and has already begun in some ways) to be refocused to deal more explicitly with national level prioritization processes and implementation challenges associated with the GEF support.

## 5.4 Conclusion

This evaluation of the CDW reveals that in retrospect the initiative has been successful in meeting its crucial objectives of:

- ◆ Educating a broad-based national audience about the GEF – its mission, strategy, policies and procedures.
- ◆ Promoting country level dialogue on needs and priorities, coordination and sharing of information, including best practices and lessons learned in protecting the global environment.
- ◆ Promoting practical information on how to access GEF resources and how to identify, prepare and implement GEF-financed activities.

Several areas for potential improvement were noted in terms of implementation approaches and in terms of the need to resituate the CDW within the context of a longer-term effort and concerted process to build the OFP and national coordination capacity for the implementation and mainstreaming of the global conventions. This will include making special efforts to further move the dialogue at a strategic level and broaden it to include a wider range of stakeholders not just in the workshop themselves, but in the policy level dialogue process that needs to take place prior to and after the workshop. This will be crucial in ensuring a sound foundation for coordination at the national level, a transparent and inclusive dialogue between the GEF and its partners, and will allow the CDW to continue to reflect the emerging programmatic approach being embraced by the GEF itself.

Taking these key challenges into account, and building on the successes of the CDW so far, the evaluation team recommends the following:

**Recommendation:** *It is recommended that there be an expanded second phase for the CDWs, which takes into account recommendations made throughout this report and should also be understood and supported within a broader context of capacity development for OFPs and other concerted efforts to address and enhance country level coordination and knowledge related to the actual implementation of the global conventions. This recommendation implies two subsequent necessities:*

- a) *that the WCU receive further and increased support to manage effectively the CDWs and the strategic level dialogue prior to, during, and after these workshops, and;*
- b) *that there be more resources available for workshops to be implemented in a greater number of countries.*

## 6. Summary of Recommendations

For facilitation and simplification of consultation, the main recommendations from this evaluation are reproduced and regrouped below.

### 6.1 Design

6.1.1: *It is recommended that future initiatives such as the CDW adequately account for needed preparation time in the start up phase, especially in view of the need to develop materials and modules that are flexible and can be easily adapted to country needs.*

6.1.2: *It is also recommended that there be adequate resources and time allocated for ensuring that the proper and appropriate translation of workshop materials is secured for each CDW, where possible, in order to ensure a culturally appropriate medium for good knowledge transfer.*

6.1.3: *It is recommended that adequate time and action taken to ensure that there is a high level of dialogue with a broader array of national stakeholders during CDW design. This could be achieved through the conduct of a pre-workshop needs assessment and a meeting involving a broader representation of CDW participants.*

6.1.4: *The GEF should build on the selection criteria set for the CDWs, and reflect on the need to refocus the priority for country selection for CDWs. Below is a suggested list of criteria for future discussion within a framework of a renewed CDW:*

- ◆ *Eligibility, i.e. ratification of relevant conventions;*
- ◆ *Urgent need identified in the country;*
- ◆ *Willingness to engage in a dialogue on strategic and programmatic priorities at the country level;*
- ◆ *Transparent and inclusive nature of GEF coordinating structure in the country and/or potential to further the dialogue on the instigation of such a structure;*
- ◆ *Demonstration of high level of commitment by the focal point to assist with workshop planning and organization;*
- ◆ *Demonstration of commitment by the focal point to involve further in the national dialogue non-traditional economic development actors;*
- ◆ *Potential for synergies between the CDW and other GEF and IA interventions focused on building the coordination capacity of the GEF OFP;*
- ◆ *Extent of challenges faced by the country in implementing the conventions; and,*
- ◆ *Potential to increase leverage on global environmental funding in support of national priorities.*

### 6.2 Implementation

6.2.1: *It is recommended that the valuable work done by the WCU and the UNDP local offices be recognized and built upon in subsequent CDW activities.*

6.2.2: *It is recommended that adequate and ample resources continue to support the functions of the SC, and that these be increased to allow for enhanced SC dialogue with the countries, especially*

*prior to the Workshops, to further the strategic dialogue process between the GEF and the countries. Chairmanship of this process by the GEFSEC should be supported.*

*6.2.3: It is recommended that relevant material be sent to participants prior to CDW Workshops to enhance background knowledge and make the most effective and efficient use of time during the Workshops.*

*6.2.4: It is recommended that there be an increase in the overall facilitation of, and of activities that are conducive to, the dialogue and sharing of experiences amongst diverse stakeholders at these workshops.*

*6.2.5: It is recommended that there be an increase in presentations made by nationals at the Workshops (and therefore a decrease in presentations made by the SC, GEFSEC and IAs or others), which will be conducive to higher attention and participation, and will also be a catalyst for the transfer of knowledge about the GEF and issues of national relevance related to the GEF.*

*Some recommendations for further website improvement include the following:*

- ◆ There should be more visual effects, and*
- ◆ There should be a section on impacts and implications, where recommendations of the workshops, feedback from participants, indicators of success, and success stories would be found.*
- ◆ A virtual forum should be added to allow discussion and follow up on questions from the participants after the workshop. The forum could also be used as a means to ensure cross-fertilization and exchange of lessons between countries as well as to help sustain networking.*

### *6.3 Impacts*

*6.3.1: It is recommended that CDW management more closely investigate the appropriateness of the CDW modalities for:*

- ◆ raising the interest of civil society (NGOs) and the private sector in the Workshop through more targeted sessions within the context of the CDW, and greater efforts to ensure their participation overall in CDW preparation;*
- ◆ eliciting other and multiple donor participation to the event.*

*6.3.2: It is recommended that the project implementation team place emphasis on the promotion of dialogue amongst diverse national stakeholders related to the environment. This should be done both in terms of ensuring high representation from diverse sectors (including among others energy, transport, agriculture and forestry sectors) and also through a facilitation of participation and dialogue during the Workshops themselves, as it is a rare and important opportunity not to be missed.*

*6.3.3: It is recommended that a new phase of CDW recognize the need for longer term and sustained efforts at building the capacity of the OFP in order to allow them to effectively carry on their mandate and be better advocate for coordinated efforts to address global environmental issues. In that respect, the CDW should be designed as one element of a broader effort to build OFP capacity, which would effectively link with other initiatives such as the 'Support to OFP' initiative from the GEF.*

*6.3.4: It is recommended that the CDW further promote the involvement of other donors through the CDW dialogue forum and process. The CDWs should continue to focus on enhancing IA coordination through the Workshops.*

*6.3.5: It is recommended that follow-up activities should be inserted in the design of the CDW, to sustain and further enhanced coordination and an inclusive dialogue amongst IAs and national stakeholders.*

*Overall Recommendation:*

*It is recommended that there be an expanded second phase for the CDWs, which takes into account recommendations made throughout this report and should also be understood and supported within a broader context of capacity development for OFPs and other concerted efforts to address and enhance country level coordination and knowledge related to the actual implementation of the global conventions. This recommendation implies two subsequent necessities:*

- a) that the WCU receive further and increased support to manage effectively the CDWs and the strategic level dialogue prior to, during, and after these workshops, and;*
- b) that there be more resources available for workshops to be implemented in a greater number of countries.*