

# Global Environment Facility (GEF)

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) was established in 1992, on the eve of the Rio Earth Summit, to address all the environmental problems. It has so far provided funds to the tune of billions of dollars, for thousands of projects executed in hundreds of countries. It is Located in Washington DC, USA.

## **Global Environment Facility (GEF) - Financing Different Conventions**

The GEF serves as the financial mechanism for the following International Conventions which deals with protecting the Environment.

1. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
2. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
3. Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)
4. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

## **Global Environment Facility (GEF) - Funding of Projects**

Global Environment Facility (GEF) provides funds for the projects in the following areas which are listed below.

1. Climate Change
2. Land Degradation
3. Biodiversity
4. Food Security
5. Sustainable Cities
6. International Waters
7. Sustainable Forest Management
8. Ozone Layer

## **Global Environment Facility (GEF) - Major Role by India**

1. India is both a Donor to GEF as well as a Recipient of funding from GEF.
2. India has been a leading developing country participant in the GEF since its inception and has played a major role in shaping the restructuring of the GEF. The Ministry of Finance is the political focal point while the Ministry of Environment & Forests is the Operational Focal Point for the GEF Projects.
3. India, Bhutan, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh have together formed a permanent Constituency in the Executive Council of the GEF

4. The Council Meetings are held semi-annually or as frequently as necessary. At each meeting, the Council elects a Chairperson from among its members for the duration of that meeting.
5. India's Executive Director in the The World Bank represents the GEF Council

## **Global Environment Facility (GEF) - Funding Projects in India**

Currently, India receives funding for projects by GEF in the following 3 focal areas.

1. Climate Change
2. Biodiversity
3. Land Degradation

The major chunk of the funding is for the Climate Change focal area, followed by Biodiversity. Land Degradation is the distant 3rd in terms of funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). GEF is currently funding more than 70 projects in India and overall in the region more than 100 projects are being funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

## **Global Environment Facility (GEF) Agencies - Operational Arm of GEF**

Global Environment Facility (GEF) agencies are the operational arm of the GEF. Overall GEF works with **18 different agencies** which in turn collaborates with government agencies, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to design, develop and implement GEF-funded projects and programs. Some of the GEF agencies are listed below.

1. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
2. World Bank
3. Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)
4. Asian Development Bank (ADB)
5. World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
6. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
7. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

## **Latest News on GEF - COVID-19 Pandemic**

### **Response to COVID-19 Pandemic**

To help address the present situation and reduce the probability of new environmental crises emerging in the foreseeable future, GEF has come up with a set of plans which are bifurcated into immediate, medium and long term plans. The response also includes efforts to support a green economic recovery consistent with sustainable and nature-based development.

The pressures on ecosystems is bringing wild animals and humans in dangerous proximity. The response of Global Environment Facility (GEF) encompasses measures to address the following

1. Deforestation
2. Trading of wildlife
3. Urban Sprawl

The 3 different Plans of the Global Environment Facility are given below.

### **Immediate Actions**

1. **Trading on Wildlife** - There will be a focus on keeping a check and monitoring the consumption of wildlife products and bushmeat. GEF is collaborating with the World Bank and other partners in Africa and Asia to invest in innovative solutions.
2. Group of experts will work on analysing the risks that may arise from infectious diseases in the future. They will analyse the root causes of how it is connected with deforestation and crumbling of the ecosystem.
3. GEF will look into ways of sustaining the current programs and projects by identifying risks associated with it due to the current pandemic and make sure that gains made in the past and favourable outcomes expected in the future are not compromised.

### **Medium-Term Actions**

1. Blueprint would be developed for green recovery by exploring different ways of deploying upcoming and ongoing projects.
2. The Blueprint will also club the opportunities and risks arising due to COVID-19 pandemic. It will examine how the crisis will affect mining, cities, and food security.

### **Long-Term Actions**

1. It will explore ways to bring balance between natural systems and human systems and explore a lasting solution to the COVID-19 pandemic.