

## **BBNJ Preparatory Commission provisional guidance to the ninth Global Environment Facility (GEF) Trust Fund replenishment**

### **Background:**

The ninth replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund initiated in December 2024 and concludes in June 2026<sup>1</sup>. Three replenishment meetings will discuss the GEF-9 strategy (programming directions) and policy enhancements. The first replenishment meeting was held from 20-21 May 2025. The second and third replenishment meetings are planned for 7-9 October 2025 and 19-21 January 2026. A fourth replenishment meeting from 16-18 March 2026 will finalize donor replenishment pledges.

GEF-9 replenishment participants negotiate and decide on the GEF Trust Fund support for the BBNJ Agreement. The timeline for the BBNJ Agreement Preparatory Commission to propose provisional guidance for GEF-9 replenishment participants to consider must happen in time for the January 2026 third GEF-9 replenishment meeting.

The initial draft of the GEF-9 strategy, the GEF-9 Strategic Positioning and Programming Directions<sup>2</sup> (programming directions document), was discussed by replenishment participants at the first GEF-9 replenishment meeting in May 2025. The specific text for supporting the BBNJ Agreement in the GEF-9 programming directions document is presented in Annex A. The revised draft of the GEF-9 programming directions document based on initial GEF-9 replenishment participants' comments will be posted online by 10 September 2025 for discussion October 2025 second GEF-9 replenishment meeting.

The draft text for GEF-9 support for the BBNJ Agreement presented in Annex A is part of the International Waters Focal Area, one of five focal areas of the GEF Trust Fund. The International Waters Focal Area is the main GEF window investing in conservation and sustainable use of areas beyond national jurisdiction and the GEF focal area providing GEF-8 funding for ratification support and implementation readiness of the BBNJ Agreement<sup>3</sup>. The draft text presents support to the BBNJ Agreement as one of three standalone objectives proposed for the International Waters Focal Area in the initial draft of the GEF-9 Strategic Positioning and Programming Directions document. The other two objectives focus on strengthening sustainable management in shared coastal and marine ecosystems (Objective 1) and strengthening the management of shared freshwater ecosystems (Objective 3). GEF Focal Area resources are nominally allocated by objective by replenishment participants towards the end of a replenishment process once donor pledges are finalized and the total replenishment amount is known.

<sup>1</sup> For more information, see GEF-9 Replenishment: Participation, Work Plan and Proposed Timetable, [GEF/R.9/01. Rev01](#)

<sup>2</sup> Draft GEF-9 Strategic Positioning and Programming Directions, [GEF/R.9/05](#)

<sup>3</sup> Initial Guidelines for Enabling Activities and Ratification Support Projects for the BBNJ Agreement, [GEF/C.66/07](#)

**Annex A:**

**Initial text for specific support to the BBNJ Agreement presented in the Draft GEF-9 Strategic Positioning and Programming Directions document\***

\*Draft GEF-9 Strategic Positioning and Programming Directions, [GEF/R.9/05](#)

*Objective 2: Supporting the BBNJ Agreement*

*475. Objective 2 reflects the status of the adopted BBNJ Agreement, which has not yet entered into force<sup>316</sup>. Until the Agreement enters into force, GEF-9 IW support will follow existing GEF Council guidance<sup>317 1</sup> with national-level support to ratification and implementation readiness. Additional relevant activities may also be supported at the request of negotiating Parties of the BBNJ Agreement Preparatory Commission and with agreement of GEF Council. Upon entry into force of the BBNJ Agreement, GEF-9 IW support will be guided by directions from the BBNJ Agreement COP, ensuring that duplication is avoided, and that complementarity and coherence is promoted among the utilization of the funds within the financial mechanism. Activities could include continued national-level support for ratification and implementation readiness as well as those described in Article 52(6) of the BBNJ Agreement, as follows:*

- a. Fund capacity-building projects under this Agreement, including effective projects on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity and activities and programmes, including training related to the transfer of marine technology*
- b. Assist developing States Parties in implementing this Agreement*
- c. Support conservation and sustainable use programmes by IPLCs as holders of traditional knowledge*
- d. Support public consultations at the national, subregional and regional levels*
- e. Fund the undertaking of any other activities as decided by the COP*

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<sup>316</sup> Ratification status can be found here:

[https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg\\_no=XXI-10&chapter=21&clang=\\_en](https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=XXI-10&chapter=21&clang=_en)

<sup>317</sup> GEF/C.66/07: Initial Guidelines for Enabling Activities and Ratification Support Projects for the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)