

**“Write-shop to develop GCF Concept Notes for upscaling
Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) in Nepal, Seychelles and
Mauritania”**

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Monkey Valley Resort and Conference Centre, Cape Town, South Africa

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Contents of Notes:

1. Day One: Tuesday 7 th March 2017	4
1.1 Main points from the session.....	4
2. Day Two: Wednesday 8 th March 2017.....	7
3. Day Three: Thursday 9 th March 2017	8
3.1 An Overview of Atifa Kassam’s Presentation on the GCF	8
3.2 Q&A with Atifa Kassam	10
3.3 Atifa Kassam’s thoughts on project ideas for each country.....	10
3.4 Plenary with Anthony Mills	11
4. Day Four: Friday 10 th March 2017	12
5. Summary of the Workshop Idea Notes.....	13
5.1 Nepal.....	13
5.2 Seychelles.....	13
5.3 Mauritania	14

Presentations:

Presentation 1: *Write-shop to develop GCF Concept Notes for Upscaling of EbA in Nepal, Seychelles and Mauritania.* Presented by Dr Anthony Mills on Tuesday 7th March 2017

Presentation 2: *An Overview of the GCF.* Presented by Ms Atifa Kassim (via Skype) on Thursday 9th March 2017

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1. Day One: Tuesday 7th March 2017

- Participant introductions and welcome from Dr Mills.
- Presentation given by Anthony Mills: “Write-shop to develop GCF Concept Notes for Upscaling of EbA in Nepal, Seychelles and Mauritania.”
- This inter-regional Writing Workshop (Activity 1.2.3) forms part of Component 1 of the GEF project entitled, ‘Ecosystem-based Adaptation through South-South Cooperation’.
- The objective of Activity 1.2.3 is to: i) conduct an inter-regional writing workshop to review global and regional strategy and funding opportunities; ii) generate Concept Notes for the continuation and upscaling of EbA implementation started within the EbA South project; and iii) provide an overview of the information that is necessary for the writing of a GCF Concept Note.
- The workshop will train participants on the options available to the three pilot countries in terms of raising funding for a continuation of the EbA work started within the EbA South project.
- The expected output of the workshop is the generation of a Concept Note/ Idea Note for the Green Climate Fund (or other funding programme, depending upon priorities) for the three pilot countries of Seychelles, Nepal and Mauritania.
- The workshop will be structured to include: i) breakaway groups to develop text for each country Concept Note; and ii) plenaries to discuss and present ideas and text.
- For much of the day, participants will be split into groups with representatives from each country (Nepal, Seychelles, Mauritania) to discuss the transformational change argument for the proposed GCF Concept Notes.

1.1 Main points from the session

- What does GCF *need* to be convinced to distribute funds? A story (transformational change) and country-specific details.
- Important attributes of GCF: i) ambitious contribution; ii) country-driven approach; iii) adaptation; and iv) mitigation.
- GCF project budgets: i) Micro (<US\$10 million); ii) Small (US\$10-50 million); iii) Medium (US\$50-250 million); and iv) Large (>US\$250 million).
- Silvia Cazzetta provided an overview of the UN Environment’s International Ecosystem Management Partnership (UNEP-IEMP) and the Climate, Ecosystems and Livelihoods (CEL) Flagship Programme.
 - CEL forms the overarching framework for the implementation of the UNEP-GEF project, “Ecosystem-based Adaptation through South-South Co-operation” (EbA South).
 - The Chinese Ecosystem Research Network (CERN) – one of the largest ecosystem monitoring and research networks in the world – is providing technical support to the CEL Programme.
 - The CEL Programme uses an inter-disciplinary approach to bring together physical science, economics and social science, which is used to inform EbA interventions.

- The CEL Programme assists countries in Asia, West Asia and Africa to: i) integrate EbA approaches into their national plans and regional development strategies; ii) inform policy debates; and iii) support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals.
 - EbA South has been identified as one of the flagship initiatives for South-South Co-operation on climate change, which is jointly developed and supported by UN Environment and China.
- Areas to focus on when designing a GCF project (GCF foci):
 - Transformative change and paradigm shift
 - Justification of grant financing
 - Co-financing commitments
 - Consultation requirements
 - Site-specific information
 - Vulnerability of stakeholders to climate change
 - Link of interventions to climate change threats (adaptation rationale)
 - Technical feasibility of interventions
 - Economic/financial feasibility of interventions
 - Gender
 - Large-scale construction of ecological infrastructure
 - Capacity building
 - Changing regulations, policies, legislation
 - Cross-sectoral planning and governance
 - Large-scale construction of ecological infrastructure
 - Capacity building
 - Changing regulations/policies/legislations
 - Cross-sectoral planning and governance
 - Full community participation
 - Generation and dissemination of knowledge
- Important aspects of transformational change:
 - Innovation
 - Institutional/budget changes
 - Emphasis on scaling up
 - No piloting
 - Beyond sustainability
 - NAP
 - Business case for interventions (how to integrate livelihoods and/or local economy)
 - De-risking of investments for private and public sector
 - University courses and school curricula

- Long-term research – embedding in institutions, archiving of rigorous data, monitoring of data by communities – creates buy-in and provides a source of income
- Cross-sectoral engagement e.g. accountants and engineers, Dept. of Environment and Dept. Public Works

2. Day Two: Wednesday 8th March 2017

- Morning plenary to: i) discuss progress with Concept Note writing for each country; and ii) revise the previous day's discussions on building the transformational change argument.
- Questions that need to be considered in the writing of the Concept Notes are:
 - Why do we need GCF *grant* funds?
- Group sessions were held in the morning to:
 - Further discuss and write paragraphs to strengthen the points of transformational change and paradigm shifts in each of the projects.
 - Write about the necessary broad objectives and activities (higher-level) which are necessary to achieve the paradigm shift.
 - Work towards defining the outputs, activities and inputs for the log-frames of each project.
 - Determine what the co-financing or complementary investment/partner opportunities are.
 - Find evidence to support the assumptions that have been made.
- An afternoon plenary session was held to discuss the content that needs to be written in the relevant sections of the Concept Note:
 - B1: 4/5 paragraphs. Needs to sell the project and be specific to the relevant project.
 - B2: Description of the EbA South project that UNEP-IEMP has been involved in.
 - B3: Provide a market overview where applicable (i.e. for small businesses).
 - D1: Specify how the project will tackle climate change threats.
 - D2: Flesh out the transformational change and adaptation rationale argument.
- An afternoon plenary session was held to share the logframes developed for each project.

3. Day Three: Thursday 9th March 2017

- Morning plenary to discuss progress with the output, activity and input creation for each country.
- Main points from Anthony Mills:
 - The entire team needs to get together and discuss the project logframes and ensure that everyone is on the same page.
 - Need to spend an hour or two developing a pyramid of activities for outputs.
 - The projects can be a combination of grey and green infrastructure, but the focus does need to be on the green infrastructure (80% green, 20% grey).
- Main points from Silvia Cazzetta:
 - Need to remember that these projects will be the second phase of the EbA South, a project with a strong South-South Co-operation focus (China is sharing its knowledge with developing countries and developing countries are sharing their knowledge with one other).
 - We want to include a South-South Co-operation dimension and show in our outputs that the projects may involve regional approaches.

3.1 An Overview of Atifa Kassam's Presentation on the GCF

- Presentation provided: i) a general overview of the GCF fund; and ii) UN Environment's perspective on the GCF.
- The purpose of the GCF:
 - To finance resilience building in LDCs and developing countries against the impacts of CC.
- Organisation of the GCF:
 - As of 2017, the GCF has raised about US\$ 10.5 billion in funds.
 - Agreed to fund adaptation and mitigation 50/50 (this includes REDD+ as mitigation) – however this hasn't yet happened.
- GCF Fund Access:
 - Direct access – subnational, regional and national implementing entities.
 - International access – international implementing entities.
- Investment criteria:
 - Impact potential
 - Paradigm shift potential
 - Sustainable development potential
 - Responsive to the recipients' needs
 - Promote country ownership
 - Efficiency and effectiveness – for mitigation this needs to show offsetting

- GCF allocation of resources:
 - Particularly for LDCs, SIDs, African developing states and developing states.
- GCF Project cycle:
 - Generation of funding proposals.
 - Concept note development (voluntary – but it's too early to say whether it is not necessary).
 - Submission of funding proposal – funding proposals cost in the region of about US\$ 200,000. However, it is impossible to know whether GCF will accept the project: this is a risk that the project country and implementing entity need to take. It takes time for the GCF to provide feedback on a Concept Note. However, if a country is willing to take the time to create a Concept Note, it will provide an idea of whether the project will be accepted before investing in the creation of a Funding Proposal. There is also a Project Preparation Facility which provides financial support to countries preparing a project proposal. The funding is not guaranteed and needs to be applied for. There is no clear indication yet from the GCF as to how easy this funding will be to obtain, or how many PPFs they are willing to give out.
 - Analysis and recommendations.
 - Board decision.
 - Legal arrangements.
- UN Environment's internal organisation for the GCF:
 - UN Environment's coordination and leadership role rests with the GCF co-ordination office.
- Alignment with the UN Environment Medium-term strategy:
 - The UN Environment objectives regarding climate change are to assist countries in moving towards lower emissions, sustainable development and adaptation.
- Elements of the UN Environment work program:
 - Readiness support
 - Redirecting unsustainable financial flows
 - Promoting EbA and mitigation
 - Fostering low emissions development
- Early lessons from project formulation:
 - GCF is different to every other funding body.
 - The GCF documentation requirements are extensive and often confusing.
 - Guidance is constantly shifting and can be easily interpreted in different ways.
 - The GCF have much more stringent rules surrounding co-financing in comparison to the GEF.
 - It seems as though the rules will continue to change for some time – it is a learning process.
 - It can take some time for the UN Environment approval committee to internally approve a project. This is important to consider when developing project timelines.

3.2 Q&A with Atifa Kassam

Question: How interlinked are the internal teams at UN Environment?

Answer: The teams are very interlinked at the UNEP office and work together all the time.

Question: UN Agencies are requesting that GCF projects get written faster than what is practically possible for the consultant, with projects that typically take 18 months to develop, being requested in 3-4 months. Logic tells us that larger projects should take longer to prepare, but agencies are giving consultancies a shorter space of time within which to develop projects.

Answer: There are mismatches and they come from the fact that there are no clear guidelines coming from the GCF. In the past, with GEF, there have been agreements of timelines but this doesn't seem to have happened yet for the GCF, and so now there is a big race between UN agencies trying to get funding first. As a result, many projects going through the process do not meet the required standards. The member states of the GCF need to slow the process down and set timelines. For example, we were placed under major pressure both internally and by The Gambia to draw up the project documents and a year after approval we are still working on getting legal agreements set in place, and we subsequently haven't been able to start the project.

Question: We will have had 3 and ½ days to prepare GCF Concept Notes, and I told the group this morning that the term "Concept Note" is inappropriate because an actual Concept Note would take a number of months (including in-country missions) to create. We should probably call it an "Idea Note" that focuses on the story line and the transformative change and paradigm shifting angles of the project. We want to write these "Idea Notes" at the start of a project. It could then take another 18 months to produce a Funding Proposal for the project. So we should look at this write-shop as the initial output. What do you think?

Answer: We should view this write-shop as the place in which to create ideas that could then be elaborated and fine-tuned later on to create actual projects.

3.3 Atifa Kassam's thoughts on project ideas for each country

- Need to fully understand what other projects are doing before we create a new project.
- Need to focus on what the country wants.
- Need to focus on how much the country will gain/how much they will get out of the investment (financially).
- Each sector needs to see a benefit and buy-in from the project.
- It would be really exciting to see knowledge-sharing occurring between countries, under the South-South Co-operation theme.
- Need to consider land tenure – who will manage the land after the project's funding comes to an end?
- Need to think about barriers to government collaboration.
- Need to have strong data/research backing up project ideas.
- Need to think deeply about how the project will continue after the GCF project ends – is it sustainable?
- Need to make sure that we are not replicating work that has been done before.
- Groups continued project work for much of the day, compiling text for the Idea Note.

3.4 Plenary with Anthony Mills

- Each group needs to take some time to come up with the opening paragraphs (elevator pitch). This needs to:
 - Explain the problem very quickly
 - Focus on the transformational change argument
 - Grab the readers' attention
- Each group needs to come up with questions to be asked in-country to help guide the Idea Note.
- Each group must not lose sight of the fact that we need big projects to partner with our initiatives. Groups therefore need to:
 - Research where large amounts of money are being spent in each country (tens of million US\$)

4. Day Four: Friday 10th March 2017

- The final day began with a plenary to discuss how text is progressing – have all GCF foci (discussed on Day 1) been adequately addressed in the Idea Note?
- Regional project ideas were generated and strengthened for Mauritania, Nepal and Seychelles. These ideas – in the list below – are to be included in the Idea Notes generated in the write-shop.
 - Mauritania will share lessons learned and best practices with West African countries where similar ecosystems and baseline initiatives exist.
 - Seychelles will develop a knowledge hub where information will be shared with other SIDS (such as Mauritius and Madagascar).
 - Nepal will use information and knowledge generated in China – regarding the restoration of their watersheds ecosystems.
- Groups were asked to populate the Concept Note template with text written for the Idea Note over the previous days.
- For the sections of the Concept Note template, which are unable to be completed, questions should be inserted to guide the development of the Concept Note.
- The remainder of the day was focussed on these tasks, to produce the Concept Note with as many sections completed, and an Annex with background information for each country (e.g. geography, climate, socio-economic situation).
- In the afternoon, all participants watched the EbA South ‘mini-documentary’ and were reminded of the EbA South website which has recently been upgraded (ebasouth.org).
- All participants were encouraged to join the EbA South website, as members affiliated to the relevant country. The website also serves as a platform where one can remain up to date with EbA South news.
- The workshop ended with thanks from Anthony Mills and Silvia Cazzetta.
- Finalisation of text for the Idea/Concept Notes and supporting Annexes for each country will continue into the week of 13-17th March 2017.

5. Summary of the Workshop Idea Notes

5.1 Nepal

- Climate change effects in Nepal are resulting in a shortened monsoon season and an increased intensity of rainfall, which will increase the: i) rate of soil erosion; ii) intensity and frequency of flooding; iii) length of dry periods; and iv) occurrence of landslides. Such hazards will be most severe in degraded watersheds that can no longer provide the ecosystem services of reducing soil erosion and attenuating floods. Hydroelectricity Plants (HEPs) in these watersheds are expected to be at considerable risk from these climate change impacts.
- An example of an HEP at risk is the Upper Karnali HEP, which is currently under construction in the Karnali River Basin (KRB).
- Watershed restoration using innovative ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approaches to reduce soil erosion and restrict runoff will climate-proof HEPs downstream. Implementing EbA to restore watersheds in the KRB will reduce the likelihood of declines in productivity and large-scale failure of the Upper Karnali HEP under climate change conditions.
- The proposed project will: i) climate-proof hydroelectrical capacity by applying watershed restoration in the hill and mountain regions in the west of Nepal; ii) transform water management policies and institutions to support large-scale EbA implementation and upscaling as well as public-private partnerships between water users; and iii) strengthen knowledge and capacity to implement large-scale EbA interventions under South-South Cooperation context.
- In the near-term, the Nepalese hydroelectric sector is planning to install hydroelectric infrastructure costing between US\$22 billion and US\$110 billion. Implementing EbA interventions alongside this infrastructure will reduce the impacts of climate change, thereby de-risking hydroelectric projects, which will subsequently attract considerable investment from HEP operators.

5.2 Seychelles

- Climate change is accelerating sea level rise and increasing the frequency of extreme weather events in the Seychelles. The climate-sensitive coastal zone already experiences extensive erosion and flooding, and climate change will exacerbate these impacts because of the increased frequency and severity of coastal storm surges.
- Most of the country's infrastructure and economic activities are located within one kilometre of the coastline, and climate change impacts will therefore place the Seychellois economy and population at extreme risk.
- The proposed project will protect coastal infrastructure in the Seychelles by constructing climate change-resilient artificial reefs and restoring coastal wetlands and dunes. Climate-resilient coral species will be transplanted onto the artificial reefs to initiate the re-establishment of a living reef.
- In addition to restoring coastal ecosystems, the proposed project will facilitate urban development that is set back from the vulnerable coastal zone.

- This ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approach will: i) increase the resilience of the Seychelles to the effects of climate change; ii) provide multiple socioeconomic benefits to local communities and the tourism sector; and iii) catalyse transformative change in the country's development pathway. On a regional scale, the Seychelles will serve as a model for EbA in the Southwest Indian Ocean.

5.3 Mauritania

- Mauritania is predicted to experience more frequent droughts and increases in temperature as a result of climate change, which will impact the livelihoods of local communities.
- Climate change effects, particularly desertification, are predicted to worsen in the future, compounding the current development challenges facing the country.
- The proposed project will focus on three main outputs, which include: i) the establishment of agro-forestry landscapes using drought-tolerant, indigenous plant species to combat desertification and to provide multiple Non-Timber Forest Products; ii) the development of local businesses based on natural resources derived from the agro-forestry landscapes; and iii) the strengthening of the knowledge exchange between research institutes and the Government of Mauritania, as well South-South Cooperation.
- The use of climate change-resilient, indigenous plant species for replanting efforts differs from past and existing baseline initiatives in several ways:
 - The use of indigenous plant species will combat the effects of climate change-induced desertification by increasing biodiversity and promoting dune stabilisation within an otherwise arid landscape;
 - The plant species will provide a diversity of products including fibre, fruit and medicines.
 - Businesses will be established in local communities to process the NTFPs thereby improving the value chain for agroforestry products and securing rural livelihoods threatened by the adverse effects of climate change.

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