

Transitioning to GEF-7 results architecture: the new RFS M&E system

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Background

“For projects approved during the GEF-6 period, July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2018, that have not yet been completed, Agencies shift to core indicators and sub-indicators at the next available opportunity in the project cycle and are no longer required to submit tracking tools. For full-sized projects and programmes that have received Council Approval during GEF-6, Agencies apply the core indicators and sub-indicators across any requests for CEO Endorsement submitted after July 1, 2018. For projects that have received CEO Endorsement/ Approval during GEF-6, Agencies apply the core indicators and sub-indicators at mid-term – if applicable – or project completion.”

GEF. Guidelines on Core Indicators and Sub-Indicators. Guidelines ME/GN/02 approved on 30 June 2018.

- Pursuant to a change in GEF reporting requirements, the RFS Programme Coordination Unit (PCU) undertook to shift from the GEF-6 key indicators for GEBs to GEF-7 core indicators and sub-indicators.
- The RFS regional programme effectively started applying the core indicators and sub-indicators at programme mid-term (June 2021).
- A key task performed by the PCU in managing this transition consisted of ensuring that, **for each GEF-6 GEB, the corresponding GEF-7 core indicator and sub-indicator(s) were adequately identified and carried over.**
 - The interpretation of country projects’ contributions to these core indicators were systematically cross-checked with country M&E officers to ensure data accuracy (engagements between April-June 2020).

Correlating GEBs with GEF-7 sub-indicators the RFS contributes to

GEBS (GEF-6)	TARGETS	CORE INDICATORS (GEF-7)	EQUIVALENT TARGET REACHED BASED ON AGGREGATED TARGETS FROM COUNTRIES
GEB 1. Landscapes and seascapes under improved management for biodiversity conservation (million hectares):	1.1 million ha (as per the GEF 2018 brochure)	RFS contributes to sub-indicators 1.2 + 3.2 + 3.3 + 3.4.	788,395 ha
GEB 2. Production landscapes under improved management (million hectares):	2.1 million ha million ha (GEF 2018 brochure) and 1,775,144 ha (PDR)	RFS contributes to 3.1 + 4.3.	803,514 ha
GEB 4. GHG emissions avoided and carbon sequestered (metric tons of CO ₂ e):	59 million MtCO ₂ eq (GEF 2018 brochure)	RFS contributes to sub-indicators 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4 ^s	56,8 MtCO ₂ eq
GEB 6. Enhance capacity of countries to implement MEAs (multilateral environmental agreements) and mainstream into national and sub-national policy, planning financial and legal frameworks	10 countries	This GEB is not carried over as a core-indicator under GEF-7. Reference to MEA is made in the results matrix indicator "1.2.4) Sectoral planning frameworks are developed and integrate measurable targets drawn from the Multilateral Environmental Agreements MEAs"	1 country (TBC)

- $GEB\ 1 = 1.2 + 3.2 + 3.3 + 3.4$
- $GEB\ 2 = 3.1 + 4.3$
- $GEB\ 4 = 6.1 + 6.2 + 6.3 + 6.4$
- All targets were revised based on aggregation of country projects' updated estimates.

RFS contributions to GEF-7 core indicators

	GEF-7 CORE INDICATORS	DEFINITIONS	CORRESPONDING GEB (GEF-6)/ COMMENTS
Core Indicator 1	Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management for conservation and sustainable use (hectares)	This indicator will be reported as the aggregate total of two Sub-Indicators (see below)	
Sub-indicator 1.2	Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness (hectares)	Number of hectares of protected area whose management has been improved. The main data source for this indicator is the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) score, which is calculated using the GEF-7 BD tracking tool (www.thegef.org/documents/gef-7-biodiversity-protected-area-tracking-tool). The number of hectares of protected area should be counted only if the score increases over the life of the project.	Landscapes and seascapes under improved management for biodiversity conservation (million hectares) (GEB 1)
Core Indicator 3	Area of land restored (hectares) (Ecological restoration)	This indicator will be reported as the aggregate total of four Sub-Indicators. To avoid double-counting, the hectares reported under each Sub-Indicator should not overlap. (see below). This indicator captures the total area of land undergoing restoration in terms of ecosystem function and/or ecology. Activities may include (i) ecosystem restoration that reduces the causes of decline and improves basic functions; and (ii) ecological restoration that enhances native habitats, sustains ecosystem resilience, and conserves biodiversity.	
Sub-indicator 3.1	Area of degraded agricultural lands restored (hectares)	This indicator captures the area of agricultural land in a degraded state that is being restored through GEF-funded interventions. These interventions include restoration practices to enhance soil and water conservation, erosion control, groundwater recharge, and improved vegetative cover. While not required, projects should ideally provide GIS files showing the extent of the degraded land being restored and also to indicate the relative state of the area prior to GEF activities.	Production landscapes under improved management (million hectares) (GEB 2)

	GEF-7 CORE INDICATORS	DEFINITIONS	CORRESPONDING GEB (GEF-6)/ COMMENTS
Sub-indicator 3.2	Area of forest and forest land restored (hectares)	This indicator captures the area of forest and forest land that is undergoing ecological restoration through GEF-funded interventions. Ex: creation of corridors between protected areas, targeted eradication, management or control of Invasive Alien Species.	Landscapes and seascapes under improved management for biodiversity conservation (million hectares) (GEB 1)
Sub-indicator 3.3	Area of natural grass and shrublands restored (hectares)	This indicator captures the area of natural grass and shrublands that is undergoing ecological restoration through GEF-funded interventions Ex: corridors between protected areas, targeted eradication, and management or control of Invasive Alien Species.	Landscapes and seascapes under improved management for biodiversity conservation (million hectares) (GEB 1)
Sub-indicator 3.4	Area of wetlands (incl. estuaries, mangroves) restored (hectares)	This indicator captures the area of wetlands, including estuaries and mangroves that is undergoing ecological restoration through GEF-funded interventions. ex. creation of corridors between protected areas, targeted eradication, management or control of Invasive Alien Species.	Landscapes and seascapes under improved management for biodiversity conservation (million hectares) (GEB 1)
Indicator 4	Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)	This indicator will be reported as the aggregate total of four Sub-Indicators (4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4). To avoid double-counting, hectares reported under each Sub-Indicator must not overlap. This indicator captures the total area of landscapes under improved practices, including in production sectors (e.g., agriculture, rangeland, forestry, aquaculture, tourism, extractives [oil and gas]) that lead to improved environmental conditions and/or for which management plans have been prepared and endorsed and are under implementation. This indicator is directly related to Aichi Biodiversity Target 7 of the CBD and to Land Degradation Neutrality country targets under UNCCD.	
Sub-indicator 4.3	Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems (hectares)	Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems (hectares) This indicator captures the landscape area that is in production (e.g., agriculture, rangeland, and forests) and whose soil, air, and water are managed in a sustainable manner. The project should indicate the details of management practices. This Sub-Indicator is distinguished from Sub-Indicator 4.2 by capturing improved practices that benefit physical improvements in the environment (e.g., soil and soil carbon, nutrient recycling, diversity and functionality of vegetation cover, micro-climates, and water).	Production landscapes under improved management (million hectares) (GEB 2)

RFS contributions to GEF-7 core indicators (cont.)

	GEF-7 CORE INDICATORS	DEFINITIONS	CORRESPONDING GEB (GEF-6)/ COMMENTS
Core Indicator 6	Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (metric tons of CO2e)		Greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (metric tons of CO2e) (GEB 4)
Sub-Indicator 6.1	Above and below ground carbon sequestered and/or loss avoided (metric tons of CO2e)	<p>Carbon sequestration is defined as the process of increasing the carbon content of a reservoir/ pool other than the atmosphere (IPCC, 2012). Avoided emissions refers to reduced emissions due to avoided deforestation or forest degradation, sustainable forest management, and improved practices on other land uses such as in agriculture.</p> <p>Regarding the Agriculture, Forestry, and Land Use Change Lifetime, the length of time is defined as 20 years, unless an alternative number of years is deemed appropriate. For emission or removal factors (tons of CO2e per hectare per annum), the defaults to be applied are those of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) or country-specific factors.</p> <p>This includes i) lifetime direct project GHG emissions mitigated (during the project's supervised implementation period) and ii) lifetime direct post-project emissions mitigated (investments outside the project's supervised implementation period, but supported by financial facilities or regulatory interventions by the GEF project, totalled over the respective lifetime of the investments), and (iii) lifetime indirect GHG emissions mitigated (attributable to the long-term outcomes of GEF activities that remove barriers, such as capacity building, innovation, and catalytic action for replication).</p>	n/a
Sub-Indicator 6.2	Emissions avoided (metric tons of CO2e)	Emissions avoided as measured by countries through the EX-ACT tool	n/a
Sub-Indicator 6.3	Energy saved (MWh)	This contextual Sub-Indicator should be used if a project aims to achieve energy savings. It is calculated as the amount of energy use avoided by the intervention over the lifetime of the investment.	n/a

	GEF-7 CORE INDICATORS	DEFINITIONS	CORRESPONDING GEB (GEF-6)/ COMMENTS
Sub-Indicator 6.4	Increase in installed renewable energy capacity per technology (MW). Repeat for each technology	This Sub-Indicator should be reported on if a project aims to increase renewable energy generation or storage capacity. It refers to the rated capacity of a heat or power generating plant or the aggregate potential output of a collection of such. The Sub-Indicator will also account for projects that increase energy storage capacity of grid power for load shifting and variable renewable energy integration or storage of self-generated renewable power for later use. Among others, energy storage capacity may refer to pumped storage; home-, commercial- or grid-scale batteries; and thermal storage.	n/a
Core Indicator 11	Number of direct beneficiaries disaggregated by gender as co-benefit of GEF investment	This indicator captures the number of individual people who receive targeted support from a given GEF project/activity and/or who use the specific resources that the project maintains or enhances. Support is defined as direct assistance from the project/activity. Direct beneficiaries are all individuals receiving targeted support from a given project. Targeted support is the intentional and direct assistance of a project to individuals or groups of individuals who are aware that they are receiving that support and/or who use the specific resources.	Previously captured in number of households under GEF-6

Observations on this transition

- The GEF-7 results architecture does not make any explicit mention of **agro-biodiversity**.
 - It was decided to incorporate any agro-biodiversity-related activity that concerns land additional to recovery activities (core indicator 3) under the GEF-7 sub-indicator 4.3: *“Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems”*.
- Contributions to **multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs)** do not feature in GEF-7 core indicators as explicitly as they do in GEF-6 (GEB 6).
 - It was decided to retain one indicator making explicit mention of MEAs, namely indicator 1.2.4: *“Sectoral planning frameworks are developed and integrate measurable targets drawn from the Multilateral Environmental Agreements MEAs”*.
- The number of **direct beneficiaries** was not a GEB under GEF-6 (it was recognized as a key socio-economic indicator in the RFS previous RMF) and now features as a core indicator (# 11).
 - Note a switch from the number of beneficiary households to the number of individual beneficiaries disaggregated by gender. This transition poses a methodological challenge in terms of gender disaggregation.
- For reporting on GEF-7 sub-indicator 1.2 *“Terrestrial protected areas under improved management effectiveness (hectares)”*:
 - The main data source for this indicator is the **Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) score**, which is calculated using the [GEF-7 Biodiversity Protected Area Tracking Tool](#).

Updated RFS Monitoring & Evaluation Plan

All the transition process and results are explained in detail at our new [RFS M&E Plan](#), including:

- Regional-level results framework matrix;
- Logical framework;
- Description of reports and tools for assessing progress;
- Strategy for documentation and sharing information;
- Responsibilities of the various partners in collecting and analyzing the M&E data.



Available at the
Resource Library of
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Key takeaways from liaising with country projects

- All RFS country projects were formally approached and informed by the PCU about the transition in 2020. They were also asked about when this transition would take place.
- Initially none of the projects seemed to be aware of this required transition and indicated that they would be discussing this internally.
- Nonetheless, the work conducted by the Regional Hub with country teams ensured that, **at regional level**, this transition has been **completed**.
- In April 2021, RFS countries which were still to embark on their MTR were reminded of this need to transition to GEF-7 results architecture.



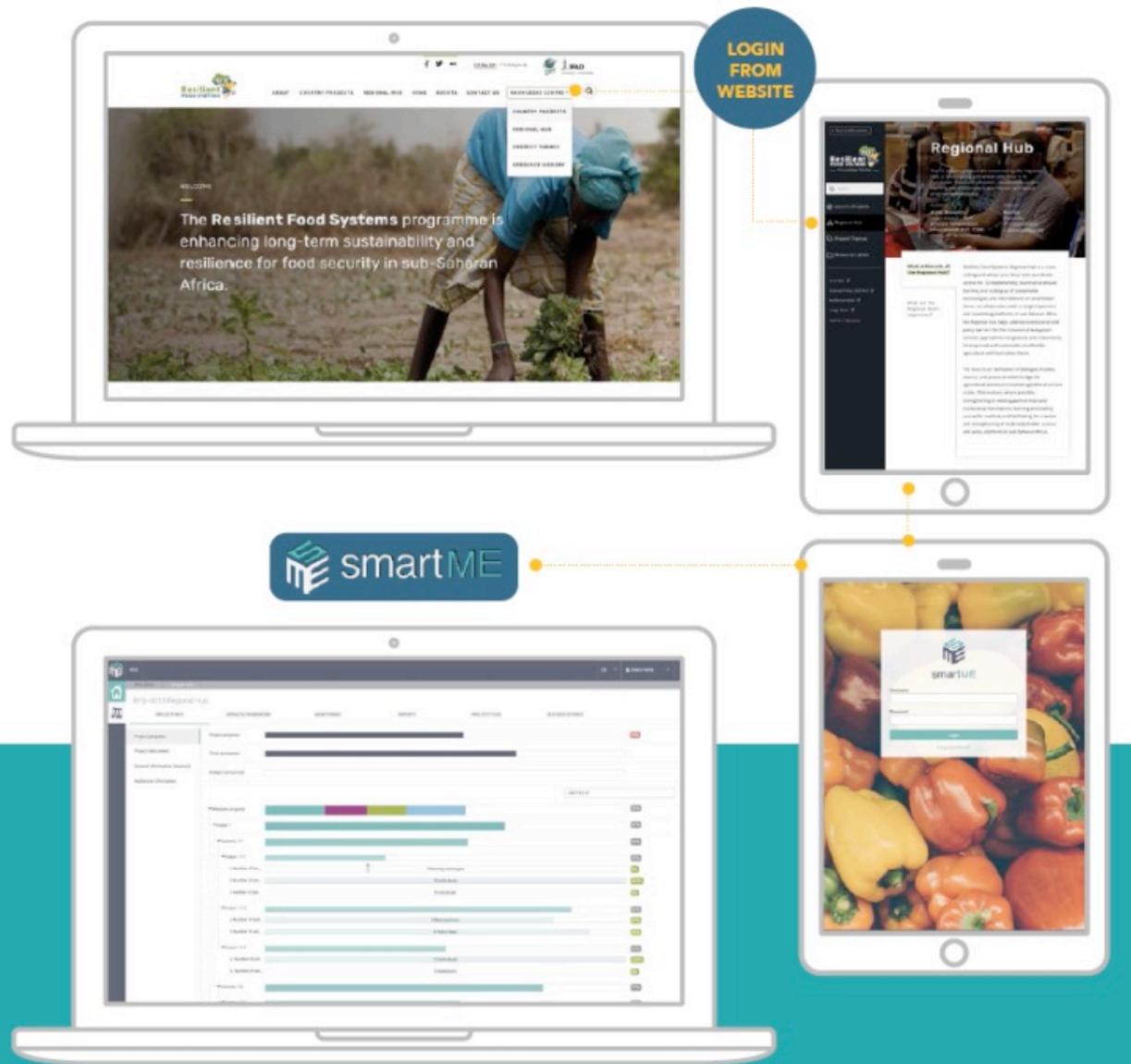


Next steps

- The programme's consolidated results can only be as good as the aggregated contributions from each project.
- Starting at the current 2021 PIR season, each RFS project will be expected to report annually on all programme-level indicators it has committed to contribute to:
 - (Including but not limited to) core indicators. See: [the GEF 7 core indicator work sheet](#)
 - This is in addition to standard reporting on original project-level indicators as already captured through existing PIR templates.
- The Regional Hub will **continue to support RFS country teams** as needed.
 - The PCU will share new templates and follow up separately with each team, to ensure this exercise is completed by the end of September.

Virtual tour of the RFS M&E platform (SmartME)





Operationalizing the RFS M&E platform

- Data on the platform is updated annually by the ICRAF.
- It remains the responsibility of management teams and Implementing Agencies for each RFS project to access this system regularly (even as Programme Observers) and check whether the data displayed for their respective projects are accurate
 - Please report any errors or required updates to the PCU.
- While the platform is primarily focused on the consolidation of regional, programme-level data...



...it's available for country-level use as well

- Representatives from RFS country projects interested in using the online M&E system to monitor progress of their own projects are encouraged to manifest such interest to the PCU.
- **Access rights and training can be provided** by ICRAF at cost to allow the users to:
 - Upload and update their country-level digital results framework;
 - Report directly against project-level indicators and targets built in their digital results framework;
 - Easily upload project files to be shared with all Programme Observers;
 - Design project-specific dashboards.



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