

COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Education and Publicity Sub-Committee

Paper 05/06

Sustainable Development Fund – Assessment Procedures for the Fourth Round of Applications

Purpose

This paper seeks Members' agreement to the proposed assessment procedures for the fourth round of applications to the Sustainable Development Fund (SDF).

Proposal

2. We propose that Members endorse the assessment procedures outlined in paragraphs 3 to 6 below.

Considerations

3. By the closing date of the fourth round of applications on 31 August 2006, the SDU received 39 submissions, applying for a total grant exceeding \$79 million (the corresponding figures for the third round are 43 submissions and \$63 million). A list of the applications received and a table showing the applications by type of organization, are at **Annexes A and B** respectively, for Members' reference.

4. Given the number of applications received, the SDU has the capacity to undertake a detailed assessment of all the applications within a reasonable timeframe without the need to form a Vetting Committee (VC) and its sub-groups to conduct initial screening and short-listing of applications. We propose to follow similar assessment procedures adopted in the third round, i.e. the SDU would conduct the pre-screening and scoring for the applications while the EPSC, rather than a VC, would review the projects in detail. Past experience has shown that these procedures help streamline the process and avoid any inconsistencies arising from the difference in membership of the VC and the EPSC. Similar to the previous round, the SDU will also provide, apart from scores, descriptive comments under each assessment criterion. Two flow charts showing (i) the timeframe and assessment procedures for the

current round, and (ii) comparison with the assessment procedures for the previous rounds are at **Annexes C and D** respectively for Members' reference.

5. At the last EPSC meeting on 11 April 2006, Members agreed that during the assessment stage, the EPSC should interview the applicants or allow them to make presentations on their proposals to facilitate better understanding and communication between the applicants and the Sub-committee. Members have also agreed that the Secretariat should shortlist applicants for interview, which may involve applications on which further clarification is necessary before formal approval is considered, as well as those which marginally meet the criteria but in some ways merit EPSC's consideration. We propose that Members do not need to meet applicants of straightforward cases, i.e. where applications can be approved or rejected on the basis of their merits.

6. The SDU will distribute CD ROMs containing the applications to all EPSC Members. At the same time, the SDU, in accordance with the assessment criteria at **Annex E** and the assessment form at **Annex F**, would conduct a detailed initial assessment of the applications and shortlist applicants for interview.

Further Action

7. Subject to Members' views, we will prepare the detailed initial assessments of the applications for EPSC's consideration in November/ December 2006. Where necessary, we will seek expert advice and recommendations from relevant Government departments and/or funds.

Council Secretariat
September 2006