

Check upon delivery



## **Speech**

**Monique Barbut, CEO and Chairperson  
Global Environment Facility**

**Central Asia & Switzerland Expanded Constituency Workshop  
Berne, Switzerland, May 30, 2012**

Welcome, all of you, to Berne for this, my last constituency workshop as CEO of the GEF. As many of you know, my second and final term as CEO and Chairperson of the GEF ends July 31<sup>st</sup>. In a few days the GEF Council will gather in Washington to make critical decisions for the GEF's Fifth Replenishment. Then it is off to Rio de Janeiro for the Rio+20 summit, when, I hope, we can re-energize the global environmental movement behind new ideas, new technology and new goals.

While I enjoy the challenge posed by such lofty gatherings, it is at these workshops that I feel the real work of the GEF is accomplished. I am a practical person. I like to focus on how to get things done, how to do things more efficiently, and how to put our good ideas into practice in the real world. That is why the constituency workshops are so important to me. I take pride in what the GEF has accomplished over the past six years, and I want you to know that the significant results we have achieved would not have been possible without your participation, your ideas, and your energy during my tenure.

During my tenure the GEF has invested more than US\$ 255 million and secured nearly US\$ 909 million in co-financing in the Central Asia region. This ability to generate cofinancing is what I mean when I say that the GEF is a catalyst for global investment in environmental benefits. We have worked together on projects to secure global environmental benefits in climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, and capacity development. We have addressed the needs of civil society and community-based organizations through our Small Grants Programme. At the national level alone we have invested almost US\$ 120 million and attracted US\$ 587million in co-financing in the small grants sector.

This significant investment has been made possible in no small part because of your hard work to ensure effective design and implementation of projects. I hope all of you have had a chance to visit the interactive map under the “Results & Learning” tab on our web site. It provides region-by-region information on our performance as tracked in our Annual Monitoring Report. If you compare the performance for the Europe and Central Asia Constituency, you will see that under the Development Objective Category, 92 percent of your projects under implementation have been rated moderately satisfactory, satisfactory or highly satisfactory. This compares to

a global average of 83 percent. Under the Implementation Progress category, fully 94 percent of your projects under implementation were moderately to highly satisfactory, compared to 87 percent GEF-wide. We all should feel proud of this record.

I would like also to highlight that our investments very much depend on your initiatives, dedication, and commitment. I'm happy to highlight that among the most active countries in the region are Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. We value your attention to environmental issues and look forward for stronger cooperation in the future for addressing global environmental issues through national and regional projects.

For the upcoming work program, we have put forward the best of your projects totaling more than US\$ 12 million, and I would like to highlight one project in particular relating to Sustainable Forest Management and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, or SFM/REDD+. The Kyrgyz Republic has a notable project entitled *Sustainable Management of Mountainous Forest and Land Resources under Climate Change Conditions* (FAO). Supported by a US\$ 5.4 million GEF grant and US\$ 17.1 million in Co-financing). The proposed project would

contribute to the sustainable management of mountainous regions encompassing forest, farms and pasturelands in the Kyrgyz Republic. The project aims to influence production practices employed by the forestry and agriculture sectors, (including pastures, and supporting climate change mitigation by improving management of natural forests, rehabilitating degraded lands and promoting conservation agriculture. One of our great overriding themes is the strong linkage between environmental and economic progress. That is why we are so enthusiastic about the innovations and incentives that benefit our country partners through participatory monitoring, community driven approaches, and knowledge exchange. About 1.8 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent benefits are expected through efforts that, at the same time, deliver real and sustainable economic benefits.

As I mentioned, the GEF Council meets next week in Washington and one of the important topics on the agenda is the fee structure for agencies. A GEF Working Group comprised of myself, four Council members and two representatives of GEF agencies will present to the Council a plan for lowering fees to the GEF Agencies. The effective fee rate would decline from 9.68 percent to 9.2 percent. This means more money available to countries for programs.

I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to all of you for these years for close cooperation with me and for your support to my work. I will never forget your hospitality shown to me during my visit to the region in 2008, when I had an opportunity to success of our projects including to taste tomatoes and cucumbers that I had not tasted since my childhood, and I look forward for an opportunity to do it again!

Thank you and I hope you have a most productive workshop.