

Check upon delivery



**Farewell Remarks
To Council**

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

**June 7, 2012
MC Auditorium**

Dear Members of the Council, Agency representatives and colleagues,

Thank you for a very productive and engaging Council meeting. Together, over the last three days we have climbed some great steps for the GEF:

- We have expanded the GEF network by admitting some highly qualified national, regional, and international entities, including NGOs. This is bound to change the character of the GEF in the years ahead and move us closer to achieving the reality of fully being driven by country priorities and engaging with capacity on the ground;
- We have agreed on a fee policy that will ensure that more resources are available for programming in countries.
- We have approved a sensible budget for the forthcoming year; and
- Finally, you have elected in Naoko Ishii a strong and credible CEO after an internationally competitive and transparent process.

This is not a surprise. Every Council meeting during my six years at the GEF has been marked by significant achievement. I don't want to go through a

long list of accomplishments, but suffice to say that we have taken the GEF to another level in its evolution.

I would like to invite you back in time to the early 90's when we established the GEF, and remember our collective vision then. I think we bet right in creating the GEF, enshrining it within an Instrument and providing it with a well-balanced governance structure and a strong network of agencies. The proof of the reliability of the GEF structure is in the fact that new funds created over the last several years, some as a reaction to the GEF, have all ended up looking remarkably similar to the GEF in term of governance.

While some significant reforms have moved the GEF forward, there are others that you could consider together with the incoming CEO in the years ahead. Here is a shortlist:

- After an assessment of the current pilot, serious consideration needs to be given to opening up the network for more qualified national entities.
- Further streamlining of the project cycle is essential to ensure that our business standards reflect the pace at which the world is moving;

- The conventional replenishment process needs to be complemented by resources garnered employing innovative instruments --- if you recall, we had a brief discussion of the subject during the last replenishment.
- Provision of GEF resources in a non-grant mode need to be considered for countries that are relatively better off; and
- Last, you will have to address the issue on the legal personality of the GEF and further building our brand identity to win new support.

So, while there are challenges ahead, the good six years that I have had at the GEF now comes to an end!

Together with all of you here and our wide network of partners around the world, I have enjoyed each minute that we have spent “investing in our planet.”

I will miss the close working relationships that I have enjoyed with all of you. So many of you will remain in my thoughts as I leave the GEF.

Some in particular made sure that we did not nod off at Council meetings:

Whenever Josef Buys intervened and held a seminar on the GEF history, I was glad that we would not be condemned to ignore history and repeat mistakes.

With his penetrative questions, Tewolde, our Ethiopian friend, tested whether the Secretariat actually understood the contents of the documents that we presented, making Secretariat staff squirm in their seats.

Other African colleagues such as Zahir, Osita, Teophile, Justin, Albert, Anyaa, and Alimata shared with us their wisdom, but have also proven to be true friends of the GEF.

Beth and Gib, with their earnest demeanor and frank interventions, ensured that we undertook difficult, challenging, but worthwhile paths in our policymaking process.

Frank, wanting options on top of options for every policy under consideration, made us very creative.

To my Chinese friends, wo xiang jie xie xie Wu Jiang-Kang xiansheng he qita zhong guo pengyou dui wo guo qu liu nian de zhi chi he guan zhao.

I would like to thank Mr. Wu Jian Kang and other Chinese friends for all supports and care over the past six years.

And of course, I must thank the French delegations which succeeded in giving me their unfailing support.

I am going to stop now because I do not want to tease the entire Council, but thank you to all of you.

It remains however to acknowledge the Secretariat staff. It would be an understatement to say that I have driven them hard during the last six years. To their credit, they have not only stood up to my pace, but many of them have even begun accelerating past me! They have been the cornerstones to our collective achievements, and I am sure that they will serve the new CEO and the Council well in the years to come.

I know that I have given our agencies a hard time, but they have also risen to the challenges time and again and helped pull together unprecedented work programs, including the one that you approved at this Council meeting.

Lastly, I salute our intrepid interpreters. I have challenged them time and again with my rapid stream of consciousness, verbal calisthenics, and expressions that defied interpretation. However, they rose to the occasion time and again, translating into other languages, including courageously into French. I am grateful for your patience toward me.

Now, you have a new CEO who will take you forward, and I wish Naoko the very best and the highest rates of return for further investments in our planet.

Au revoir, dear colleagues and friends. Thank you for giving me some of the best years of my professional life. In Swahili for my African friends:

ASANTE NA KWAHERI YA KUONANA