



GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY
INVESTING IN OUR PLANET

SIDS Reception Remarks/ Discussion Points

Monique Barbut, CEO and Chairperson
Global Environment Facility

Small Island States Reception
Venue: Mart Restaurant - Bella Center
Date : December 8, 2009 @ 19 :30

Thank you for coming to this reception/dinner. I think this is the third time we have met for a reception during the COP, and I hope this is becoming a nice tradition. As you know GEF 4 is coming to an end and the replenishment discussions are almost complete; we have one more meeting this February, before the GEF Assembly in May 2010. This replenishment process has been unique in that for the first time non-donor recipient countries have participated in the discussions. The islands have been represented by the GEF Council members from Barbados and Papua New Guinea. [recognize delegates here?]

I know that the resource allocation system has not been popular and we have proposed changes in the new systems –the STAR, which stands for The System for Transparent Allocation of Resources.

I am sure you are wondering what is different besides a name! well I assure you there is a lot. First unlike the old system each country will have specific allocations. No countries will be in the group. We have proposed maximum flexibility for the SIDS countries so that they can use their allocation in any focal area they chose. For example if you wish to use your biodiversity or land degradation allocations for a climate change project you can do so. We are also proposing direct access for a range of institutions which include civil society and

national entities, especially for national communications and we have proposed to continue with the programmatic approach used in the GEF-PAS. I know that the Caribbean did not go forward with a program but I think the Pacific benefited with almost US\$90 million of projects approved. We have seen good results there and we must also learn the lessons. The option for a program will remain in GEF5, and if the Caribbean decides to have a program in GEF5, the responsibility lies with you to do the necessary work which is required. The GEF Sec can help you but I am sure you do not want us to do the work for you. You know what is best but again we are here to facilitate a good program that meets the needs of international conventions such as this one.

I know that many of you have been asking for changes in the way in which the GEF does its business. We have a number of proposals which we are currently working with our council to implement in GEF 5. These include voluntary national GEF project portfolio development that countries can use as a framework for programming without dealing with an agency at this stage. The plans offer the opportunity for countries to step back, take a comprehensive look at GEF support across the different focal areas, and decide how best to employ the support in service of the country's priorities. The GEF will provide the financing for this.

We also plan to enhance our accountability to the COP. Let me give you some of the ideas now being discussed:

- Periodic and increased consultations between the GEF and the convention secretariats, including more engagement during the replenishment process;
- Strategic engagements between the GEF and the conventions in developing and implementing convention guidance;
- Systematic involvement of the various convention focal points at the country-level in country dialogue and voluntary national GEF portfolio identification exercise;
- Involvement of the convention secretariats in GEF national dialogues and other sub-regional meetings.
- Participation by the GEF, to the extent possible, in the various awareness raising, scientific and technical workshops organized by the conventions;
- Refinement of the GEF reporting process to the conventions; and
- Sharing of the outcomes of the national GEF portfolio identification exercises with the conventions.

We of course need more feedback and I am here to solicit your views as we move forward in the process.

On the issue of Post 2012 financing systems, I think we first need to consider what alternatives we have now that are in place. Any new financial mechanism will take time to construct and develop, and thus the GEF still have an important role to play in the interim. This is why it is very important for you more than us that the GEF have a good replenishment. The GEF is well placed to be the institution to implement the “fast track financing” that we are all talking about. Unlike other institutions e.g – (the multilateral banks) the GEF follows COP guidance, and funds such as the SCCF and LDCF are set up in direct response to COP Guidance. The resources which the GEF has are verifiable. Everyone knows when someone does not pay into the GEF funds. Again this is unlike other institutions. All of our documents are available for you to see on the internet. We have full public disclosure with all information so you can track everything that is going on. We also have reformed our project cycle so the funds get where they are supposed to sooner. Now the average time is 12 months instead of 44.

I can promise you this standard will be upheld in GEF-5. Another important thing to know about GEF-5 is that we have proposed more equitable access for you and more flexibility.

So let me finish here with a word on our adaptation portfolio. As we move forward in these uncertain times I know that adaptation is a critical concern for all of you: it

is a life and death issue in fact. We have the Adaptation Fund, but this only receives proceeds from the CDM and is constrained by this single flow of resources into the fund. We also know that it is unlikely some countries will ever put any money in the Adaptation Fund. So let me be blunt and a little practical here too: I think we need to have more focus on the LDCF and SCCF. We have proposed to have the replenishment of the LDCF and SCCF at the same time as the GEF Trust fund to ensure predictability and substantial scaling up of these resources which should work in tandem. I think the adaptation component of the SCCF is especially important for the SIDS which are not LDCs.

SO let me wrap up by saying that I am here to listen and to learn from you

Ok I have talked enough. Now it's your turn!