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Letter from the CEO

Dear Colleagues:

Here in Washington March roared like a lion; snow blanketed the city reminding us that spring may be coming... but it is not here quite yet! Still there is no doubt change is in the air: in less than a month the city's world famous cherry trees will be in bloom, reminding us that we are at a time of renewal.

It also is a time of renewal for the GEF: as I outlined in the last issue of Talking Points, I have been meeting with GEF Council members and other stakeholders on our reform agenda to make us a more efficient institution. Obviously a top priority for me is the GEF-5 replenishment which is needed to reinforce our position as the financial instrument for all the conventions we currently serve. We will be holding our first donor meeting later this month in Paris with further discussions throughout the year.

The replenishment process also offers the opportunity to promote fundamental reforms regarding the legal, institutional, and policy architecture of the GEF. We need a new way forward to help this unique networked institution grow into a multilateral instrument that can truly meet the challenges of the 21st century. These reforms can build on the inherent strengths of the GEF, while responding to a rapidly changing context. There is truly no other public financial institution that is as transparent as we are or has the kind of open governance structure that dedicates a sizeable portion of its administrative budget to independent evaluation. The bottom line is we keep our administrative overhead low so we can spend money on projects, not bureaucracy.

This translates into a key comparative advantage for the GEF given it remains the only dedicated institution addressing threats to the global environment in an integrated manner. It has become in essence the only operational entity of the financial mechanism of the most encompassing of the international environment conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

To help keep our promises and secure our vision, the Secretariat proposes that six strategic elements, outlined below, encapsulate our position for the Fifth Replenishment.

The GEF should continue to evolve as the pivotal operating entity of the financial mechanism of several environmental conventions. The GEF should continue to provide assistance to a larger number of countries compared to other sources of financing; provide a comprehensive approach through a combination of investment, technical assistance, and scientific assessment; and provide an integrated approach linking different conventions and focal areas.

GEF should build on the track-record as the coordinator and/or manager of several funds, particularly with the management of several funds entrusted to it under the UNFCCC.

The GEF should clarify the application of GEF tools with regard to grant and non-grant mechanisms, directing grants towards implementation undertaken by governments and employing non-grant mechanisms in engagement with the private sector.

GEF should remain on the cutting edge of innovation catalyzing and supporting innovative technologies and approaches towards the objective of enabling replication and scaling, including by other sources of financing.

The GEF should expand engagement with the private sector, building upon advances made in GEF-4 through the Earth Fund. Expansion of private sector engagement and contributions to the GEF may require reforms in the GEF governance to provide private sector representation.

Finally, the GEF should refine its approaches in the focal areas to reflect the emerging scientific and policy understanding. It is proposed that GEF strategies be developed along four themes: (i) mitigation of climate change: (ii) reduction of chemical pollution: (iii) management of natural resources; and (iv) transversal approaches covering sustainable forest management (LULUCF/REDD) and adaptation to climate change.

I look forward to working with GEF partners and stakeholders on this with the goal of strengthening this institution so it remains the world's leading source of funding for the global environment.

For the latest updates on the replenishment process I encourage you to check our website at www.thegef.org.

In This Issue

I also encourage you to read through our latest issue which highlights the important path-breaking work we are doing in the International Waters area. The Fifth World Water Forum is being held this March in Istanbul and GEF work in International Waters is prominent in many sessions of the Forum. In this issue we feature articles on reducing mercury releases and toxic water pollution, an ongoing collaboration in the Lake Victoria Basin with the World Bank, and the latest on tackling coastal dead zones that is related to disruption of the global nitrogen cycle. We also highlight an exciting new public private partnership, Save Your Logo, a revolutionary approach to fundraising for biodiversity conservation.

Slashing Mercury Releases and Toxic Water Pollution

By Al Duda, GEF Senior Advisor for International Waters

GEF has been an important contributor for a decade in helping countries test ways of reducing mercury and other persistent toxic substances that pose human and ecosystem health risks. Widespread water pollution is caused by toxic substances from industry, agricultural pesticides, and mining operations. Even in the sparsely populated Arctic, toxic substances like mercury contaminate water sources and food supplies. Both animal and human health suffers because these substances mimic hormones that end up disrupting endocrine systems and impairing the functioning of growing offspring.

The global extent of this crisis is widespread: persistent toxic substances have been known to damage the neurological systems of children as well as to “feminize” male fish in rivers across the world. From Asia to Africa, water pollution from these toxic substances is found in rivers, wetlands, and groundwater and poses risks to humans just as they do in North America and Europe.

The GEF Council over a decade ago had the vision to see this problem would escalate. Over the past 14 years we have sought to meet the challenge of addressing mercury and thousands of other “persistent toxic substances (PTS)” through the International Waters focal area. Early International Waters projects in the areas of agricultural chemical alternatives, DDT alternatives, and non-combustion alternatives for destroying chemicals gave countries confidence in signing the Stockholm Convention for Persistent Organic Pollutants like mercury which represent a very limited collection of PTS . While progress is occurring on POPS, the global challenge for the other thousands of PTS and endocrine disruptors still needs to be addressed.

Since the mid-1990s, the GEF International Waters focal area has undertake regionally-based assessments outlining human health and ecosystem concerns from PTS with the assistance of UNEP. The focal area has also demonstrated practical, cost-effective measures for reducing toxics, contaminated fisheries, and human health risks from:

- Agrichemicals in Central America and Africa with UNEP and FAO assistance
- PTS in releases from industries in Central and Eastern Europe with UNDP and UNIDO
- Mercury from artisanal gold mining with UNDP and UNIDO
- Accumulations of PTS in the Arctic through remedial techniques that can reduce human and ecosystem health risks

A particularly exciting demonstration needing replication globally involved a \$50 millions partnership (\$10 millions GEF) with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) that slashed industrial sources of water pollution in Slovenia. Innovative financing was tested by EBRD as it off-lent funding to financial intermediaries which then provided loans to small and medium sized industries for cost-effective pollution reduction measures.

In future issues of *Talking Points* we will feature articles from UNDP, UNEP and their partners FAO and UNIDO detailing results in reducing persistent toxic substances with GEF International Waters assistance.

These upcoming experiences represent additional examples of how the GEF, as a networked institution, delivers for its partners and how now more than ever we need to scale-up our operations for more significant impact.

We all carry a heavy burden of persistent toxics and women transfer that burden to their children before birth and as they breast-feed. As humans, we are undertaking a dangerous experiment with accumulating toxic substances that we should avoid if we care about the future of our children.



Indigenous peoples in the Russian North, who rely largely on fishing, hunting and herding for subsistence, are subject to some of the highest exposure levels to persistent toxic substances (PTS) on earth through consumption of contaminated food.

GEF-International Waters/World Bank project to continue successful collaboration in the Lake Victoria Basin.

By Christian Severin, GEF Program Manager for International Waters

The third in a series of GEF International Waters projects for the Lake Victoria basin was recently endorsed by the GEF CEO and approved by the World Bank Board of Directors on March 3, 2009. GEF support for progressively intense joint management of the Basin dates back to the GEF Pilot Phase, with this latest project totaling \$162 million (with GEF grants of \$6 mil in International Waters and \$1 mil in Land Degradation).

Lake Victoria, is the largest of all African Lakes, its extensive surface belongs to three countries; Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya. 85% of the water entering the lake does so from precipitation directly on to the lake surface, the remainder coming from rivers which drain the surrounding catchment. The most significant of these rivers, is the Kagera which originates from Burundi and Rwanda.

The lake basin is used as a source of food, energy, drinking and irrigation water, shelter, transport, and as a repository for human, agricultural and industrial waste. The lake itself supports 3 million people livelihood.

With a birth rate among the highest in the world, the populations of the riparian communities have increasingly come into conflict with the lake basin ones. This has contributed to rendering the lake environmentally unstable: the lake ecosystem has undergone substantial changes, which have accelerated over the last three decades.

Attempts at collaboration among Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda for Lake Victoria date back to 1928. Included among results of the first two GEF projects were:

1. The negotiation of two legal frameworks and transboundary management institutions for cooperative management of the lake fisheries and the lake basin.

The Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO) was established after a regional convention was negotiated in 1994 and the Lake Victoria Basin Commission was established in 2003 by the Protocol for Sustainable Development of Lake Victoria Basin enacted under the 1999 Treaty for the East African Community. The Basin countries of Rwanda and Burundi have also joined the Basin Commission. Regarding the fisheries that are worth more than a quarter of a billion dollars annually in exports, the LVFO is aimed at ensuring that regional fisheries management operates within a framework for environmental action rather than just a commercial orientation.

The Ugandan Minister for Environment and Water, the Hon. Maria Mutagamba, believes the GEF project has played a critical role in supporting the development of governing body as critical management mechanisms that now serve the three countries. "The Commission provides a regional institutional arrangement for the management of Lake Victoria. It provides a cooperative framework for the collaborating countries and institutions to sustainably manage Lake Victoria and its respective catchment" she says.

Major outputs of the LVEMP1

Organizational structures:

1994: Tripartite Agreement of joint implementation of LVEMP
1997: Establishment of more than 1000 Beach Management Units
1997: Establishment of Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization
2005: Establishment of Lake Victoria Basin Commission

Capacity Building:

- Data collection to better manage the complex Lake Victoria
- National Laboratory to gather and file Lake information
- National Short courses and Post graduate training 73MScs and 21PhDs
- Training of trainers in the BMUs (fishery management, agriculture, health, fish catch hygiene etc)

Innovative sustainable demonstrations

- Enacting of national and regional legislation through the BMUs
- Using natural and constructed wetlands for sewage treatment
- Weevil rearing targeting the water hyacinths
- IWRM techniques tested and implemented in local communities

1. Formation of Community-based Beach Management Units (BMU)

The Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization is supporting the formation of networks that link BMUs to governments and other stakeholders at all levels as part of fisheries co-management. BMUs are key community-based organizations and everyone working in fisheries at a beach must be registered with a unit. They must have at least 30 boats, so that they are big enough to plan, raise revenue and operate effectively, a committee with representatives from all stakeholder groups and at least 3 women.

In Uganda the project funded 51 BMUs but they were quickly replicated to 350 with funding from other sources. Across the three nations a total of 1157 Units are now active. The bottom up approach has been successful and impacted the fisheries management closer to the daily users of the lake resources, by even activating the local communities in revenue collection as well as curbing illegal fishing equipment. The component has been feeding into improving the legislative frame for fisheries in the country while at the same time improving the local management structures using a more sustainable approach

2. Bulging knowledge to sustaining development the Basin

The first phase of the LVEMP have achieved to raise awareness at a local as well as a national level on the importance of initiating local actions to reach regional solutions and action plans. Hon. Mutagamba believes the project played a critical role in helping the three riparian states to build the knowledge required to improve management of the lake and its resources.

One of the key issues for reaching a sustainable development in the Lake Victoria basin, that the second phase of LVEMP will face, will be to implement and get legislation enacted (and enforced) for running a Fish Levy Trust.

Lake Victoria being one of the African Great lakes has recently engaged into UNDP/GEF-International Waters financed partnership with the Great American Lakes. Such cross continent knowledge sharing may be one, among many, of the keys needed to be able to keep on nurturing the sustainable management capacity and environmental momentum that exists in Lake Victoria Basin.

Coastal Oceans Rapidly Warming in GEF/UNEP Assessment

By Al Duda, GEF Senior Advisor for International Waters

The global community is now awakening to the loss of economic, environmental, and community security from the degradation and depletion of coastal and marine waters. While governments have much to accomplish to sustain our coasts and oceans, the new threat of climate change just seems to make the complex situation with coastal waters even more confusing.

Through its International Waters focal area, GEF has recently supported a partnership between UNEP and the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to assess the changing conditions of our planet's coastal oceans. A recently published report of the assessment details this ocean warming along with depletion of ocean fisheries and accelerated pollution with nitrogen and other nutrients that result in coastal "Dead Zones".

The GEF-supported assessment shows that accelerated warming of the oceans is not off in the future but is already taking place. The warming of the near-coastal Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) of our planet during the last 25 years is alarming, and in one quarter of the cases, this warming is extreme and in excess of 2-4 times reported rates of warming.

The 850 page LME assessment, which was published as UNEP Regional Seas Report and Studies No. 182 in late 2008, is available at http://woodsmoke.edc.uri.edu/Portal/jsp/UNEP_report.jsp.

The GEF International Waters focal area addresses concerns of the large water systems of our planet, ranging from transboundary surface and groundwater basins to the oceans. In 1995, the GEF Council included the concept of Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) in its Operational Strategy as a pragmatic, ecosystem-based unit of management that could address cross-border features of the oceans that are under national jurisdiction and that could respect the U. N. Convention on the Law of the Sea. LMEs are relatively large areas of ocean space adjacent to the continents where 80+ percent of ocean fisheries are harvested, degraded coastal habitats are most prevalent, land-based pollution degrades the water, oil and gas produced, and valuable coastal ecosystems providing livelihoods and food security to the poor.

Figure 1 shows the 64 LMEs and the estimated rate of warming the last 25 years based on SSTs, or sea surface temperatures that have been recorded from satellite data. The warming rates are much faster than scientists have forecasted. The dark red areas are warming at the most rapid rate. Such rates of more than one degree Centigrade over 25 years are unprecedented. Together with the lighter red shaded LMEs, more than one-quarter of the planet's LMEs are warming at a very fast rate.

The most rapid warming is occurring in northeastern North America, Europe, and the East Asian LMEs. This would be expected because there is more land mass and less ocean in the northern hemisphere than in the southern hemisphere. The two LMEs shaded in blue on the western coasts of the Americas represent "upwellings" of cold water from the ocean bottom and would not be expected to be warming yet.

The areas shaded in yellow are also warming more than expected. Warming is forcing fish stocks to move in some LMEs, often to cooler waters in other countries. This disrupts food security for some coastal communities as well as investments/jobs related to fish processing and reduces food for water birds and marine mammals. Increased insecurity in coastal areas just contributes to tension that already exists among countries over disputed areas of oceans, islands, fish stocks, oil/gas reserves and pollution.

This newly-discovered warming has implications for GEF International Waters support for countries that collaborate in sharing benefits from LMEs. At present, 116 developing countries and 16 industrial countries are collaborating on GEF Council-approved LME projects in 19 LMEs, representing one half of all the LMEs shared by developing countries. This astounding coverage of one-half of developing country LMEs provides the potential to not only address existing degradation and depletion but also introduce adaptive management institutions that would be capable of responding to the warming and the unpredictable and complex stresses it brings. An increased GEF effort and scaling-up is essential if this country-driven interest is to be transformed into adaptive management institutions capable of incorporating new stresses from ocean warming, sea-level rise, coastal storm vulnerability and saline water intrusion into water supplies while addressing existing conflicts.

In the next issue of *Talking Points*, learn about depletion of fisheries found in the assessment.

Benguela Current: a Regional Ecosystem-Based Approach to Fisheries Management

By Christian Severin, GEF Program Manager for International Waters

Sweeping along the coast of south-western Africa, the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystems stretches from the Cape of Good Hope northwards into Angolan waters, encompassing the full extent of Namibia's marine environment. The nutrients that rise from the depths of the ocean along this current make it an important centre of marine biodiversity and global marine food production. In addition to a fluctuating climate the Benguela Current has also been stressed by overfishing, oil and gas extraction, and diamond mining.

Intensifying human exploitation is pushing the world's oceans to the limits of their ecological carrying capacity. According to the most recent Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) more than 75 percent of world fish stocks are already fully exploited, overexploited, depleted or recovering from depletion. 85 % of the \$70 billion annual trade in international fisheries products is coming from the 64 Large Marine Ecosystems that parallel the continental shelves. Making matters worse, pollution and other human activity on the coasts are removing key spawning and nursery habitats. The serious depletion of coastal and marine fish stocks is threatening our biological diversity and the wellbeing of our coastal communities.

Much emphasis has been made of the need for climate change adaptation activities on land. However, the rapid warming of the oceans is causing fish populations to move and one notable case of decadal ocean fluctuations involves the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem (LME), the second most productive fishery in the world. In the 1980's scientists found that warming in the Benguela was shifting currents and impacting on fisheries and sensitive biodiversity such as penguins and seals.

Adapting to a Fluctuating Climate in the Benguela Current through a Strategic Action Program / Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (SAP/TDA) approach

In 1998 the countries reliant on the Benguela (Angola, Namibia, and South Africa) requested GEF assistance (\$15.5 million leveraging \$23.5 million) to prepare an International Waters project to help manage their shared marine ecosystem. With UNDP assistance each country established national inter-ministry committees and they worked together to assemble the facts in a Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis. This enabled them to produce a Strategic Action Programme of reforms and actions they would collectively commit to. This included joint surveys and assessments of shared fish stocks, standardized management approaches, adherence to established codes of conduct for fishing, monitoring of ecosystem health and algal blooms, and capacity development for key staff and institutions.

The Diagnostic Analysis enabled stakeholders in each country to understand the complex concerns and opportunities that exist. The national inter-ministry committees were also critical because integrated approaches across sectors are an imperative for collective management of coastal and marine systems to balance benefits and reduce conflicts among water users.

The Diagnostic Analysis and the Strategic Action Programme provided a shared vision for action to protect their economic and community interests in the Benguela Current. The resulting project led to establishment of the world's first LME Commission – the Benguela Current Commission (BCC) - and a science advisory body to support the regional management of the LME. The cooperative relationship established by the project was critical to convincing the three countries to contribute more than \$18 million towards implementation of the Strategic Action Programme, including staff, laboratories, equipment and the use of research vessels.

The new Benguela Current Commission is a regional institution that will deal with conflict resolution, transboundary marine resource management, and regulatory and environmental protection issues in the Benguela Current LME. The Commission will draw on inputs from several ministries in each partner country including foreign affairs, finance, fisheries, minerals and energy, environment and tourism.

When scientists found the fluctuating climate was putting the complex system and its fisheries at even more risk the countries committed, in a second GEF project, to negotiate a regional treaty formalizing the Benguela Current Commission and their country commitments. A new regional framework will ensure that any negative impacts from economic activities, such as offshore mineral exploration, will not destroy livelihoods of coastal communities that are dependent on the sea. This final GEF intervention is now underway as countries utilize monitoring systems to forecast the behavior of the ocean and adjust their fisheries and economic activities to adapt to the fluctuating ocean.

One important initiative under the Benguela Current Project is the development of the Distance Learning and Information Sharing Tool [DLIST-Benguela]. This learning community focuses specifically on issues relevant to the coastal area from Cape Point to Northern Angola. It provides a wide variety of learning throughout The Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem and has been adopted by a number of stakeholder groups across the entire region.

Tackling Coastal Dead Zones

By Ivan Zavadsky, Sr. Water Management Specialist

The disruption of the global nitrogen cycle and the excessive use of nitrogen and phosphorus pollutants in agriculture, human sewage, and industry discharge have created almost two hundred “**Coastal Dead Zones**” that compromise the quality of water and cause environmental degradation across the planet.

The excessive pollution stimulates algal blooms that in turn use up the oxygen in the water to the point that normal fish and aquatic life cannot survive. In addition, noxious forms of algae pose a threat to other ecosystems and human health, while affecting the sources of income of local communities.

These “Dead Zones” seem to be expanding and global warming is expected to aggravate the problem. Projections of future degradation are alarming: To restore and protect coastal areas and enclosed seas, measures to reduce pollution in the river basins draining to these areas, are urgently needed.

The Danube Basin and the Black Sea

Over the last 150 years, the Danube aquatic ecosystems, biodiversity and water quality and quantity have been significantly impacted by human activities. Pollution remains a serious problem, especially from organic substances and nutrients used in agriculture, municipal wastewater (human waste and detergents) and industry. The Black Sea covers 423,000 squared kilometers, and drains an area approaching 2 million squared kilometers (about one-third of continental Europe), with a population of approximately 160 million people. The 2,870 km long Danube River drains an area just over 800,000 squared kilometers belonging to 19 countries with a combined population of about 82 million people.

Beginning in the 1970s and continuing through to the early 1990s, nutrient-enrichment of the Black Sea resulted in oxygen depletion, causing mass mortalities of animal life within huge areas of the NW Shelf. This reached a peak in 1990 when about 40,000 squared kilometers of the NW Shelf bed was effectively considered to be dead.

A Decade of GEF action to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus nutrients

For over a decade, the GEF has been engaged in the reduction of nitrogen and phosphorus pollution in the Danube Delta and downstream Black Sea.

Sixteen European countries have worked together with the GEF, UNDP, the World Bank and the European Union, to identify the causes, pledge collective action on policy reforms and priority investments, negotiate regional treaties, undertake pilot demonstrations for nutrient reduction in agriculture, municipal sewage and industrial discharges, and to trap nutrients in restored floodplains.

This partnership has been successful at decreasing nutrient loading and the Black Sea environment is responding with improved water quality, less oxygen depletion, and improved biodiversity and fisheries. The GEF grant of \$100 millions, leveraged with \$ 400 millions in co-financing and EU-supported infrastructure investments, provides a strong model for reducing Coastal Dead Zones across the planet.

In 2007, following conditions of the Black Sea were identified:

- The “Dead Zone” in the Western Black Sea has been virtually eliminated
- Oxygen Levels are at near saturation in most areas
- Number of Benthic Species increased 1.5-2 times with respect to 1980
- Invasive alien species (Mnemiopsis) significantly curtailed
- Upper reaches of the Danube Basin no longer considered at risk.

The observed recovery is linked to the economic collapse in central/eastern Europe in the early nineties (due to dramatically reduced use of fertilizers and closure of numerous livestock facilities), but also to the significant nutrient reductions achieved through the investments and governance reforms promoted through the GEF Strategic Partnership and the EU accession processes.

The series of GEF International Waters projects in the Danube/Black Sea basin since 1991 cannot take overall credit for the reductions in nutrient emissions and measured improvements in ecological/water quality. However all countries and partners acknowledge the catalytic role of these projects in focusing national awareness on the needed transboundary reduction of nitrogen and phosphorus.

In fact, the EU highlighted the Danube Programme as a model for transboundary waters governance in its report to the U.N. Commission on Sustainable Development in April 2005.

Ultimately, UNDP-GEF efforts in the Danube-Black Sea area could become a progressive model for expanding public awareness of the threats from nutrient pollution worldwide.

Projects Funded under the GEF-World Bank Investment Fund:

Project Title	Status	GEF Funding	Co-funding	Nitrogen reduction	Phosphorus reduction
		US \$ million	US \$ million	t/y	t/y
GEORGIA -	2000				
ROMANIA - Agricultural Pollution Control	12/2001	5.15	5.5	128*	110*
BULGARIA - Wetlands Restoration	06/2002	7.5	5.78	800	40
MOLDOVA - Agricultural Pollution Control	02/2004	4.96	5.79	280	70
TURKEY - Watershed Rehabilitation	06/2004	5.6	41	200	25
SERBIA - Enterprise Pollution Reduction	05/2005	9.02	13.12	430	70
BOSNIA - Water Quality Protection	06/2006	4.25	11.4	31	5
HUNGARY - Nutrient Reduction	03/2006	12.5	80	8,450	574
MOLDOVA - Environmental Infrastructure	06/2007	4.5	3.5	280	70
ROMANIA - Environmental Management	10/2007	5.5	87.5	4340	3695
CROATIA - Agricultural Pollution Control	12/2007	5	15	400	200
UKRAINE - Odessa Nutrient Reduction	12/2008	4.6	100	350	220
TOTAL		69.98	365.59	15689	5079

Nutrients Removed in the Danube Basin

Prior to the start of the GEF intervention, total emissions to the Danube Basin were estimated to be about 700 kilotons/year (kt/yr) for inorganic nitrogen and 70 kt/yr for total phosphorus, with the measured loads to the Black Sea estimated as 400 kt/yr for inorganic nitrogen and 12 kt/yr for total phosphorus. Nutrient emissions to the Danube have been substantially reduced over the last 15 years (nitrogen emissions have decreased by about 20% and phosphorus by almost 50%). This has been reflected in the upper/middle reaches of the River, where nutrient concentrations showed a clearly diminishing trend during the early 2000s. The Figure 1 shows substantial fall of flow-corrected Danube phosphorus loads to the Black Sea.

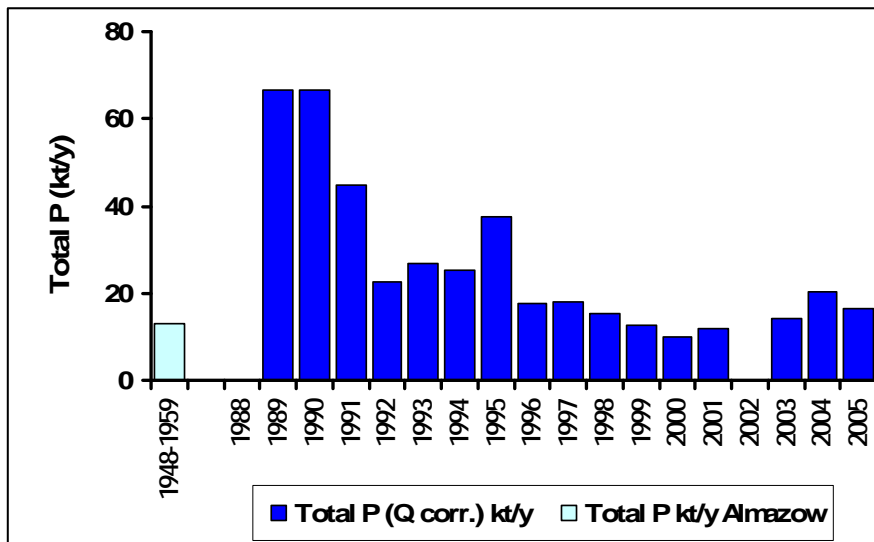


Figure 1. River Danube annual total phosphorus loads (corrected for annual discharge) to the Black Sea

Improved Black Sea Ecological Status

The North West (NW) Shelf of the Black Sea is showing quite remarkable signs of recovery. Measurable improvements have been observed in the Danube and Black Sea ecosystems over the last decade and a half. Nowhere has such nitrogen and phosphorus pollution reduction been achieved as to reverse the documented dead zone of oxygen depletion in the Black Sea's NW shelf. Oxygen depletion in the lower levels of the sea observed in the 1970s and 1980s has been virtually eliminated, with oxygen levels now at or near saturation in most areas. Significant progress was made toward achieving and even exceeding (for phosphorus) the objective of stabilizing nutrient loads to the Black Sea at 1997 levels. Phytoplankton results also strongly suggest an improving situation throughout the NW Shelf during the 1990s, and continuing improvements since then.

The frequency of algae blooms has decreased markedly compared to levels in the 1980s, and surface chlorophyll concentrations have also shown measurable decreases. This conclusion is supported by remote sensing data of chlorophyll-like substances, available since the late 1990s.

The number of benthic species observed in the early 2000s was 1.5x - 2x higher than levels found in the late 1980s, but still more than 1.5x lower than conditions in the 1960s. During the 1990s the benthic ecosystem of the NW Shelf was transformed from an almost lifeless situation to a damaged and severely modified system. By 2003, according to AZTI marine biotic index results, much of the NW Shelf was of "good" or "high" ecological status.

GEF action on Sea Level Rise

By Rawleston Moore, Adaptation and Country Relations Officer

For many developing countries in particular the small island developing states and low-lying coastal states, sea level rise, as a consequence of anthropogenic climate change, is a major problem and cause for considerable concern. The outputs of the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) will not provide any comfort for those countries susceptible to sea level rise. The scientific evidence presented in the IPCC clearly states that the rate of global sea level rise was faster from 1993 to 2003 at an average of 3.1mm per year, as compared with an average rate of 1.8mm per year from 1961 to 2003.

The IPCC notes that the situation is further compounded by the fact that even if greenhouse gas emissions were stabilized in the near future, sea levels would continue to rise for many decades. The IPCC has projected a sea level rise of 0.18 to 0.59 meters by the end of the 21st century. While these numbers may appear small and not significant only a small change in sea levels is required to cause serious damage. Sea level rise will cause coastal inundation and flooding, compound storm damage, increase coastal erosion, and cause salt water intrusion into freshwater supplies. The IPCC has projected that in the future many millions of people are projected to be flooded every year as a consequence of sea level rise. For small island developing states the future viability of many of the countries is at risk as a consequence of the changing climate and sea level rise.

Implementing adaptation activities as a response to the changing climate is one way by which developing countries can combat the onset of the changing climate. The GEF has been at the forefront of financing adaptation activities worldwide, providing the necessary resources to assist countries to adapt to sea level rise and the changing climate.

One project which the GEF has financed to assist with adaptation measures to sea level rise is the Pilot Climate Change Adaptation Measures Project in the Coastal Areas of Uruguay. With almost 70% of the population located in coastal areas, and 77.6% of the GDP derived from activities in the coastal zone, the coastal zone in Uruguay is of critical importance. The project will contribute to the long term goal of reducing vulnerability of Uruguay's coastal ecosystems to climate change through the establishment of adaptive land planning and coastal management policies and practices to enhance the resilience of Uruguay's coastal ecosystem to climate change. It is envisaged that the project will have the following outcomes: (i) The incorporation of climate change risks into national level policies and regulatory frameworks governing coastal area management strengthens Uruguay's systemic capacity for adaptation (ii) Pilot adaptation measures for coastal ecosystems at risk under predicted climate change are implemented at local levels and (iii) Knowledge management and evaluation systems facilitate the uptake and replication of coastal management adaptation experiences in Uruguay

Kiribati is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change and sea level rise. Most of the land is less than 3 meters above sea level and on average only a few hundred meters wide, rendering retreat options untenable. The islands are exposed to periodic storm surges and to droughts, and are becoming increasingly vulnerable due to high population concentration, accelerated coastal development, and environmental degradation. In Kiribati the GEF is financing an adaptation project whose objective is to develop and demonstrate the systematic diagnosis of climate-related problems and the design of cost-effective adaptation measures, while continuing the integration of climate risk awareness and responsiveness into economic and operational planning. The project is expected to improve ability of the Kiribati to adapt to the stresses presented by changes as a result of climate change. The main strategy for achieving this in this project is to improve the ability of people at the local level to interact with officials at island and national level in ways that allow integration of local level concerns and strategies with island and national level responses.

Save Your Logo: a revolutionary approach to fundraising for biodiversity conservation

By Christian Hofer, Sr. Communication Officer

The World is facing an extinction crisis. Biodiversity loss is increasing at an unprecedented rate, threatening the very basis of sustainable development. According to the IUCN Red List, at least 1 in 8 birds, 1 in 4 mammals and 1 in 3 amphibians are listed as threatened. It has been estimated that 15 to 37% of all species are committed to extinction by 2050 unless widespread and effective conservation actions are undertaken soon and maintained.

There is some good news, however. Species can recover with concerted conservation efforts. One of the key factors constraining effective efforts to conserve biodiversity is funding availability. Although considerable efforts are expended worldwide on species conservation, many of those efforts are targeted on just a few charismatic species and rely on public funds and public donations for funding support.

In response to this crisis, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), together with the World Bank, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN, as the largest network of experts on species conservation), the French Government and NOE Institute, a Belgian NGO, have joined forces to establish a Threatened Species Partnership which will be catalyzed with funding from the GEF and World Bank. This new groundbreaking initiative will support a Threatened Species Program linked to an innovative financing mechanism and a "Save Your Logo" public outreach campaign.

The Save Your Logo Fund will promote public-private partnerships to raise additional conservation funding to support the Threatened Species Program, implemented by IUCN. The SYL Fund will provide the private sector, and other donors, with a mechanism to contribute to, and support, efficient and coordinated conservation action. Many companies and organizations are already using animals in their logos and marketing strategies.

These animals are a signature part of these companies' logos or brands. According to the IUCN "Red List" of threatened species, many of these species are either threatened or endangered and will need serious and comprehensive conservation actions to survive. To date much conservation funding has come from governments, private individuals and NGOs. The SYL campaign provides an exciting opportunity to engage the private sector, encouraging companies to support their species brands and other threatened species.

There has already been considerable interest in this new initiative. Discussions are being held with numerous big companies on all continents with species logos. The cost of effective implementation of species conservation action plans varies widely, anything between \$2-5 million USD per species. Therefore each of the participating companies is expected to contribute at least 1.5 million Euros over 3 years.

These financial contributions from the private sector will be invested into the Save Your Logo fund to complement the initial funding from the World Bank and GEF. Private sector contributions will be targeted both to logo signature animals and to support much-needed conservation for some of the less charismatic and often "forgotten" threatened species – the "logo orphans" - on IUCN's Red List.

The first company to participate in the initiative has been Lacoste. For over 75 years a crocodile has been the LACOSTE logo. Now the brand will actively support projects selected by the GEF to safeguard or protect the endangered crocodile, alligator, caiman or gaviel species, whose loss would jeopardize the biological balance of their natural habitats.

This new public-private partnership will bring new partners from the private sector into the conservation community to provide new financing and complement existing conservation efforts.

A strong media and outreach campaign will bring up-to-date information on species status to the general public. The Havas media corporation has agreed to support the communication activities of the Save Your Logo campaign globally.

Given the universal nature of this project, the Internet will be an important vehicle for communication to engage the global community. Information about projects will be posted on the GEF and IUCN websites.

The collaboration between the GEF, World Bank, IUCN, Noe Institute and private sector partners is expected to engage a high level of collaboration between multiple stakeholders, to address the biodiversity crisis through cost-effective conservation action at the national level.

We are excited to be able to invite all interested companies to join this effort to save globally threatened species.

Preparation for POPs conference on the party

By Laurent Granier, Program Manager and Sr. Chemicals Specialist

The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants' fourth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 4) will take place from 4 to 8 May 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland (see www.pops.int). Ratification of the Convention is progressing steadily and the Convention now counts 162 parties. The GEF as the financial mechanism for the Convention can take some of the credit for this achievement.

For the first time in the history of the COP, new chemicals will be considered for listing in the annexes of the Convention, and will be proposed for 'Elimination' or 'Restriction'. Other key issues are also high on the agenda. Delegates will review measures to reduce or eliminate releases from intentional production and use, as well as from unintentional production. Additional matters for consideration include information exchange, technical assistance, effectiveness evaluation, non-compliance and synergies.

The GEF is an active participant in the Stockholm Convention, and has prepared a Report to the COP. This report was recently approved by the GEF Council. The GEF's Report describes its activities from January 1, 2007 to October 31, 2008. During this time, thirty-eight (38) new projects were approved, totaling US\$ 143 million and leveraging co-financing commitments of US\$ 280 million. 22 of these projects were full-sized, 11 were medium-sized, and 5 were for enabling activities to help countries finalize their National Implementation Plans (NIPs). This brings the number of countries engaged in POPs enabling activities to 135. In total, since adoption of the Stockholm Convention in May 2001, the GEF has committed US\$ 360 million to projects in the POPs focal area, which has leveraged some US\$ 440 million in co-financing.

GEF activity under the fourth replenishment (GEF-4) has been characterized by a shift away from the formulation of National Implementation Plans to helping Parties actually carry out these plans. A large number of the projects approved in the recent period address PCBs and PCB containing wastes, as well as pesticides containing waste. These projects as they are implemented will reduce POPs releases to the environment and benefit both the global environment and the health of local people and their environment.

Through these first years of GEF support to the Stockholm Convention, both delivery capacity with GEF Agencies and absorptive capacity at the country level have been strengthened. At the same time, GEF processes have been simplified to facilitate effectiveness and access. All these factors point to the strong prospects over the coming years for GEF POPs activities in support of the Stockholm Convention's implementation in developing countries.

GEF Strategic Program on Technology Transfer Endorsed by COP14

By Zhihong Zhang, Cluster Coordinator for Climate Change Mitigation and Sr. Climate Change Specialist

The 14th Conference of the Parties (COP14) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change convened in December 2008 in Poznan, Poland welcomed the GEF (renamed Poznan) Strategic Program on Technology Transfer as a step toward scaling up the level of investment in technology transfer in order to help developing countries address their needs for environmentally sound technologies. Recognizing the contribution that this strategic program could make to enhancing technology transfer activities under the Convention, COP14 also requested the GEF to consider the long-term implementation of the technology transfer strategic program.

Promoting the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and know-how to developing countries is a component of Article 4.5 of the UNFCCC. As an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC, the GEF has the mandate to provide finance resources to support the development and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries. During the 17 years of existence, the GEF has allocated \$2.5 billion to support more than 30 climate-friendly technologies in over 50 developing countries. This funding has leveraged an estimated additional \$15 billion in co-financing from the GEF's partner agencies, national and local governments, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector. In addition, the GEF has provided funding for technology needs assessments and other enabling and capacity-building activities in over 130 countries throughout the world.

The Poznan decision marked a step forward in the technology transfer negotiations by the Conference of the Parties. It is hoped that the Poznan decision will help pave the way for the upcoming negotiations on technology transfer and climate change financial architecture leading up to COP15 in Copenhagen.

The Strategic Program on Technology Transfer proposed by the GEF consists of three funding windows: (1) technology needs assessments; (2) piloting priority technology projects; and (3) dissemination of successfully demonstrated technologies. The program will have a target level of funding of \$50 million, and it will be implemented during the remainder of GEF-4. The program will complement other ongoing GEF climate change strategic programs related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainable urban transport under the GEF Trust Fund, as well as activities funded under the Special Climate Change Fund and the Least Developed Countries Fund.

GEF NGO Network News

In January 2009 Ms. Dorothy Manuel has resigned from position of Central Focal Point of the GEF NGO Network.

After over four years of service she left the Network in very strong shape for future development. Ms.M.Barbut, CEO of the GEF has expressed appreciation and commended her for dedicated work and support to the GEF.

In February of 2009 election of interim Central Focal Point (CFP) was organized. Mr. Faizal Parish, Director of the GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT CENTRE from Malaysia was elected to serve until new statute of the Network is developed and adopted.

The Global Environmental Centre is an internationally recognized organization with global HQ in Malaysia - working in partnership with government and non-government groups globally and locally on environment and natural resource management issues.

More information about the GEF NGO Network can be found at www.gefngo.org.

GEF Updates

Blogging about Conservation Science News

Reviewing, providing input and approving proposals by environmental finance and grant-making institutions require access to current, broad-based information deriving from a variety of sources.

Environmental issues are complex and their solutions laden by trade-offs. There are few, if any "correct" answers.

During the past month the GEF has started a new blog, under the direction of Gustavo Fonseca, leader of the GEF Natural Resources Team, with the hope to call attention and stimulate discussion on emerging results, analyses and commentaries coming up in the most prestigious and widely read scientific journals, particularly those relevant to GEF's mandate, but also to policy making in general.

Allocating scarce resources to competing project concepts is hardly exact science, but sound scientific guidance can definitely help.

We invite you to participate!

Global Environment Facility (GEF) Familiarization Seminar

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Familiarization Seminar is to be hosted in Washington, D.C. from April 28 to April 30, 2009. The Seminar has been put together in an initiative to provide a broader group of stakeholders with an opportunity to gain a more in-depth perspective of GEF operations and to network with GEF Secretariat staff, in particular climate change negotiators.

The three-day intensive seminar will familiarize the audience with GEF strategies, programs, policies, and procedures. The newly designed Seminar format is intended to be interactive and informative and will be enhanced by diversity of perspectives brought to it by its participants.

Focal Points and Council Members: New Appointment

Name	Country	Category	Date of Appointment
Mr. Djamel Echirk	Algeria	Council Member	01/29/2009
Dr. Silvana Terzi	Argentina	Operational Focal Point	02/11/2009
Mr. Kazi M. Aminul Islam	Bangladesh	Alternate Member	02/19/2009
Ms. Teresa Marshall	Barbados	Political Focal Point	12/16/2008
Mr. Thinley Dorji	Bhutan	Political Focal Point	01/13/2009
Ms. Jill Johnson	Canada	Council Member/LDCF.SCCF Council/Donor Participants (SCCF)	12/18/2008
Ms. Yadir Salazar	Colombia	Alternate Member/Political Focal Point	03/02/2009
Mrs. Patricia Abreu	Dominican Republic	Political Focal Point	12/29/2008
Dr. Mawaheb Aboul Azm	Egypt	Alternate Member	01/29/2009
Mr. Folke Sundman	Finland	Political Focal Point	01/13/2009
Ms. Johanna Pietikainen	Finland	Operational Focal Point	01/13/2009
His Excellency Gert Rosenthal	Guatemala	Political Focal Point	03/09/2009
Mr. Lionel Parisien	Haiti	Operational Focal Point	01/13/2009
Mr. Pulok Chatterji	India	Council Member	02/10/2009
Mrs. Kavita Prasad	India	Political Focal Point	01/28/2009
Mr. Salman Al Farisi	Indonesia	Political Focal Point	01/13/2009
Mr. Abbas Golriz	Iran	Alternate Member/Operational Focal Point/Political Focal Point	01/03/2009
Dr. Baktygul Kalambekova	Kyrgyz Republic	Political Focal Point	02/04/2009
Dr. Nexhati Jakupi	Macedonia	Political Focal Point	01/21/2009
Ms. Daniela Stefkova	Macedonia	Operational Focal Point	01/21/2009
Ms. Kino S. Kabua	Marshall Islands	Political Focal Point	01/06/2009
Mr. Imtiaz Inayat Elahi	Pakistan	Operational Focal Point/Political Focal Point	12/15/2008
Mr. Jose Antonio Gonzalez Norris	Peru	Operational Focal Point	12/10/2008
Ms. Caroline Eugene	St. Lucia	Operational Focal Point	12/04/2008
Ms. Asa Andrae	Sweden	Council Member/Political Focal Point/Donor Participants (Replenishment)	02/12/2009

News from the Evaluation Office

OPS4: Ongoing Work

OPS4 is at full speed. Recently an internal series of meetings were held to identify and plan the remaining work that needs to be done in the coming months to ensure that a preliminary report will be presented to the GEF Council in June 2009 and to the replenishment meeting.

Staff from the office participated in various sub regional meetings of focal points, hosted sessions with main stakeholders, such as representatives from local and international NGOs, the governments, and the GEF Agencies and started up country case studies for OPS4. On January 27 an interagency meeting, with participation from other stakeholders, was held to discuss the approach of OPS4 towards measuring progress towards impact.

2009 Country Portfolio Evaluations

The GEF Evaluation Office is currently undertaking Country Portfolio Evaluations in Syria and Egypt. These evaluations aim to provide Council with additional information on the results of the GEF supported activities at the country level and how these activities are implemented. The Country Portfolio Evaluations also aim to evaluate how GEF supported activities fit into the national strategies and priorities as well as within the global environmental mandate of the GEF.

During the first two weeks of March, consultation workshops will be held with key stakeholders of both countries, where preliminary findings will be presented for feedback and discussion. This is a hands-on activity, where a range of different stakeholders: government, civil society, and academia come together to discuss GEF national results. The feedback received will be taken into account in the final evaluation report. A synthesis of the reports on Syria and Egypt will be included in the GEF Evaluation Office Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation Report 2009, which will be presented to the GEF Council in June 2009.

GEF Evaluation Office is on its track to create and share knowledge on evaluation

In light of the importance knowledge capturing and sharing in the GEF EO, staff from the Office will be participating in worldwide evaluation conferences during March 2009. These presentations will be combined with significant on-going work for OPS4.

IDEAS CONFERENCE in South Africa

The Global Assembly of IDEAS (International Development Evaluation Association) will take place in Johannesburg on March 17, 2009. This assembly will focus on the issues involved in evaluation capacity building, how such efforts can strengthen the evidence available to countries to inform their own development, and what we now know of good practices in this area. IDEAS has nearly 800 members from more than 90 countries. It is anticipated that the global assembly will have an attendance of more than 300 participants. Rob van den Berg and Sandra Romboli from the Office will participate in the conference. Rob will present a workshop on evaluating international and national policies together with Indran Naidoo of the South African Public Service Commission. Sandra, in turn, will present the follow-up of the Alexandria Conference on Evaluating Climate Change and Sustainable Development.

Evaluation Conference: Perspectives on Impact Evaluation – Approaches to Assessing Development Effectiveness, in Egypt

On March 29 the Evaluation Conference Perspectives on Impact Evaluation, will take place in Cairo, Egypt. The Conference will be international but will also provide an opportunity for Africans to come together to examine the frameworks, methods and tools that guide impact evaluation practice. This conference will focus on questions such as how do we know when 'development' is truly successful? What can evaluations tell us about which policies, programs and projects work, why, for whom and under what conditions? Given the importance of reporting on results and impacts in OPS4, the conference will be attended by David Todd and Lee Risby, who together work on the impact evaluations in the GEF Evaluation Office and will be presenting a technical paper on Approaches to Impact Evaluation in the Global Environment Facility.

New Staff at the GEF Secretariat

Tuuli Bernardini

Tuuli Bernardini, a Finnish national joined the Climate and Chemicals Team of the GEF on December 15 as a Junior Professional Officer. Tuuli will support the Adaptation Fund team. She will contribute to the analysis and development of the new Adaptation Fund portfolio as it develops, including cooperation with the operational team to keep track of concepts and projects. She will also participate in designing new strategies and evaluating existing (best) practices and help organize the development of indicators and tracking tools for the Adaptation Fund portfolio for more effective cooperation with Results-Based Management system.

Prior to joining the World Bank, Tuuli worked as climate change advisor for Finn Church Aid and prior to that, as assistant of the Development Policy Committee of Finland. From 2006 to 2007, she worked around the International Year of Deserts and Desertification at the Finnish UN Association, became mother and worked as a freelance journalist and made a short training at the Inter-parliamentary Union (IPU) in Geneva calculating their carbon footprint for the IPU green budgeting. Through her previous jobs, studies and organizational activities, Tuuli has participated in various UNFCCC COP sessions.

Tuuli holds a Masters degree in Administrative Science, Environmental Policy from the University of Tampere and a title of Academic Expert in Planning and Implementation of Development Projects of the Spanish National University for Distance Education (UNED).

Josef Buchinger

Josef Buchinger, an Austrian national joined the Climate and Chemicals team of the GEF on December 1, as a Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Expert through the JPO program of the World Bank. Josef will support the work being carried out in the climate change mitigation cluster. He will help organize and steer the GEF focal area task force by developing indicators and tracking tools for a more effective cooperation in aspects of monitoring within the Results-Based Management. He will also assist the design and implementation of GEFSEC managed Strategic Reviews of selected focal area sub-portfolios for knowledge management purposes.

Prior to joining the World Bank, Josef belonged to the *arsenal research* (OFPZ Arsenal) for over 3 years. He managed projects on development, testing, standardization and dissemination of solar thermal applications in various national and international (EU, IEA) activities in the department for renewable energy technologies. From 2004 to 2005, in Nairobi, Kenya, as a Program Assistant at the Kenya Water for Health Organization, Josef broadened his technical knowledge on rural and semi-urban water supply and sanitation.

Josef holds a M.Eng. (Dipl.Ing.) in environmental engineering from the University of Leoben, Austria.

Bjoern Buesing

Bjoern Buesing, a German national joined the Operations, Policies & Finance Team of the GEF on December 19 as an Operations Assistant. Bjoern will maintain the GEFSEC operations database (checking project related data integrity and completeness of documentation) and will assist in the design and development of the new GEF PMIS.

Prior to joining the World Bank, Bjoern was working as a Senior Consultant and Technical Lead for eight years. He was mainly involved in projects of telecommunications, utility and banking industries. He gained broad knowledge regarding IT projects centered around databases, reporting & front end systems and contributed in project teams as SW designer & developer, data modeler, data analyst and project manager. From 1997 to 2000, Bjoern was working as SW engineer for the German Space Operations Centre (GSOC), designing and programming SW for realtime and offline processing of satellites' telemetry data.

Bjoern holds a diploma in physics from the University of Bielefeld, Germany, and a MBA from the University of Leicester, UK. He has submitted his MBA dissertation in August 2008, dealing with the question whether a Local Distribution Company (LDC) can effectively promote renewable energies via a suitable Internet Business Model.

Kettly Denis

Kettly G. Denis, a Haitian national, joined the Natural Resources Team as a Program Assistant on December 3. She supports the Middle East and North Africa, Eastern and Central Europe, South and East Asia regions. Kettly has more than 20 years of experience in providing administrative, managerial and operations support to a diverse range of sectors and teams.

Before joining GEF, Kettly has been working at the World Bank and IFC as a contractor for the last 2 years providing support to various units including EXTIA, EXT Front Office, EXT Global Issues Seminars, HRSTS, MENA, and CAFDR.

Before joining the Bank, Kettly worked for the USAID in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in the Private Enterprise Unit and the Comptroller's office as a Secretary, Executive Assistant, Payroll Coordinator, Voucher Examiner, and Senior Voucher Examiner.

Prior to relocating to Virginia, Kettly worked in Florida for the Child Abuse Investigations Unit of the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and the School District of Palm Beach County where she provided administrative, accounting, and translation services. Kettly speaks fluently French, Creole, and has conversational knowledge of Spanish.

Paul Dolan

Paul Dolan, an Irish national joined the GEF on January 26 as Sr. Public Private Partnerships Specialist. Paul will develop and manage the work already underway in relation to the GEF Earth Fund.

Prior to joining the GEF, Paul worked for over 20 years as an infrastructure project transactor and adviser (including development, finance, procurement and implementation) with focus on renewable energy and other environmental projects in developed and developing countries. He has extensive expertise in private sector participation in public infrastructure, including public private partnerships. Most recently, he worked with Partnerships UK based in London, and prior experience included more than ten years with Boston-based Thermo Electron Corporation.

Paul holds an MBA from Trinity College Dublin and B.E. in Mechanical Engineering from University College Dublin.

Dirk Gaul

Dirk Gaul joined the Natural Resources team of the GEF on December 15 as a German Junior Professional Officer. Dirk will mainly be involved in the development of a strategy on Sustainable Forest Management for the next replenishment period. In addition, he will provide support to the monitoring of the Sustainable Forest Management program portfolio.

Dirk holds a Bachelors degree in International Forest Ecosystem Management from Eberswalde University in Germany, a Masters degree in Ecology from Umea University in Sweden and a Ph.D. in Biodiversity and Ecology from Goettingen University in Germany.

Deborah Hines

Deborah Hines a Canadian national joined the Operations Team of the GEF on January 19 as Senior Results Based Management Specialist. Deborah will work on RBM and knowledge management coordination for the GEF Secretariat and with GEF partners.

Her prior experience included Chief, Performance and Knowledge Management; Senior Regional Advisor - Latin America- and Senior Natural Resource Advisor with the United Nations World Food Programme. At headquarters she managed a team charged with organization-wide performance measurement, strategy development and natural resource project design. In Latin America she managed a regional technical support unit for relief, rehabilitation and development strategies and projects, covering food and livelihoods security and nutrition. Deborah also has lived and worked in Africa and Asia on community-based natural resource projects.

Deborah holds a M.F. in natural resource economics from Duke University, USA. She specialized in natural resource management and conflict resolution, with research on - *Economic Considerations in Preserving Habitat for Endangered Species*.

Marcia Levaggi

Marcia, an Argentinean national, has joined the GEF as Manager of the Adaptation Fund Secretariat.

She is a lawyer (University of Buenos Aires, 1985) and a career diplomat (National Foreign Service Institute, 1989). As a diplomat, she has been posted in Zurich, Switzerland and until joining the GEF was the Head of the Technical and Economic Cooperation section of the Argentine Embassy in South Africa.

From April 2001 to January 2007 she worked at the Office of the former Representative for International Environmental Negotiations, Ambassador Raúl Estrada Oyuela. During this period she has been the Argentinean negotiator at the Montreal Protocol and climate change meetings. Additionally, in 2004 she chaired the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol as well as several bodies and working groups at the climate change and ozone meetings.

In September 2007, she was honored with the 'Outstanding Contributors Award' by the United Nations Environment Programme, on occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Montreal Protocol.

Alexis Mariani

Alexis Mariani, a French national, joined the Climate and Chemicals Team of the GEF on February 9 as a Sr. Climate Change Specialist, through the Secondment Program of the World Bank. Alexis will work on climate change mitigation.

Prior to joining the GEF, Alexis was part of the French administration. From 2001 to 2004, at the Ministry of Environment in the North of France, he worked as Manager of Sustainable Development and Environmental Impact Studies. At that time, Alexis was also one of the French representatives for the International Scheldt River Commission, in charge of water economics. From 2004 to 2008, at the metropolitan district of Rennes, a city of 400.000 inhabitants, he worked as Manager of Sustainable Development and Urban Planning. He was responsible for the development strategy of the city, specifically in the environmental and social fields. He also worked on energy and climate issues (definition of the energy and climate plan of the metropolitan area, energy-efficiency in public housing, clean urban transportation, and renewable energy).

Alexis holds a M.S. from the Ecole Polytechnique of Paris and a M.S. in Environmental Economics from the National School of Agriculture, Environment, Water and Forestry in Paris.

Ming Yang

Ming Yang, an Australian national, joined the Team of Corporate Operations, Policies and Financial Services of the GEF on December 1, 2008 as Senior Environmental Economist through the World Bank. His work involves Resource Allocation Framework (RAF), a new system for allocating GEF resources to recipient countries.

Prior to joining the GEF/World Bank Group, Ming worked for four years as Energy and Environment Economist, Energy Technology Economist and Contractor for the International Energy Agency of the OECD in Paris. Before that, he had worked for the Asian Development Bank as Energy Adviser and Climate Change Specialist for two years.

Ming is good at quantitative analysis in issues related to economics, engineering, technology and climate change. Over the past two decades, he has about 100 articles published in journals and conference proceedings in those areas. He has significantly contributed to quantitative analysis and writing of four books on energy and climate change that were published in the Asian Development Bank and the International Energy Agency.

Ming holds a Ph.D. in energy economics and planning from the Asian Institute of Technology in Bangkok jointly with l'Institut d'Economie et de Politique de l'Energie (IEPE), Université des Sciences Sociales, Grenoble, France.

New Publications



From Ridge to Reef

Water, Environment and, Community Security: GEF Action on transboundary water resources

The world's oceans, rivers, lakes, and groundwater systems do not respect political borders. These large water systems cover most of our planet, but they continue to be managed in a national and fragmented way that is endangering the food supply and livelihoods of billions of people. In this publication we explore just a handful of the GEF International Waters projects that have enabled countries to work collectively and, in many cases, to establish adaptive management institutions.



A New Climate For Forests

GEF Action on Sustainable Forest Management

This publication is intended to shed light on GEF experience in Sustainable Forestry Management, perhaps the best-kept secret in the forest financing arena worldwide. It also puts forward guiding ideas on how to build on GEF comparative advantages in financing forests in the coming years, as these invaluable, threatened resources occupy center stage in multiple international agendas.

Upcoming Events

Mar. 16-22	5th World Water Forum	Istanbul, Turkey
Mar. 16-20	19th Session of the Committee on Forestry and World Forest Week	FAO, Rome, Italy
Mar. 17	GEF BBL	
Mar. 17-18	GEF-5 Replenishment: First Meeting	Paris, France
Mar. 19	Meeting of ad hoc committee on the proposed STAR (System for Transparent Allocation of Resources) for GEF 5	Paris, France
Mar. 24-27	5th Adaptation Fund Board Meeting	Bonn, Germany
Mar. 26	Washington Women Speak, sponsored by Grant Thornton	Washington DC
Mar.30-Apr.3	57th Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund	Montreal, Canada
Apr. 2-8	CBD - Seventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing (WG ABS 7)	Paris, France
Apr. 7-9	CSP Sub-regional Workshop for GEF Focal Points from Asia	TBC
Apr. 20-21	Turkey's GEF National Dialogue	TBC
Apr. 27-29	Implementation of Renewable Energy in the Emerging Markets of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean 2009 (REEM09)	San Francisco, USA
May 4-8	4th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention	Geneva, Switzerland
May 11-15	World Oceans Conference 2009	Manado, Indonesia
May 11-15	2nd Session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management	Geneva, Switzerland
Jun. 22-26	Consultations and GEF Council Meeting	Washington DC

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