



Check against delivery



Global Environment Facility

Saint-Malo Summit

Monique Barbut,
CEO and Chairperson
Global Environment Facility

Wednesday 29 October, AM

SOMMET MONDIAL DES RÉGIONS
World Summit of Regions

29-30 octobre 2008,
Saint-Malo • France

en partenariat avec  CRPM CPMR



To the Minister,
To the President of the Regional Council,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour and great pleasure for me to take part in the first world summit of regions against climate change here in Saint-Malo, which truly comes at the right moment.

In France, the first measures resulting from the Grenelle Environment Round Table have just been voted by the Parliament and are pending application and adoption on a regional level. On a European scale, Mr Jouyet has just spoken about the negotiations on the energy-climate package that is set to start the shift towards moderate growth in carbon emissions once and for all. Lastly, you probably know that in a few weeks' time, governments from across the world will meet in Poland to draw up an outline agreement for after 2012, to follow on from the Kyoto Protocol.

The coming months will therefore be decisive in terms of how the international community will take up the unprecedented challenge of climate change, and it is vital that you commit today to acting on a regional level, sharing your experiences and encouraging your respective countries to take their responsibilities in the negotiations underway, as you did in 2002 for the Johannesburg Earth Summit.

The considerable inertia of our climatic system and the real risks of accelerated global warming due to changes in ocean currents and melting ice caps in particular, require a swift and coordinated response from the international community. Several reports, including the report by Nicholas Stern, have clearly demonstrated that early action to control greenhouse gas emissions would be the most relevant solution in economic terms. In addition, we must absolutely prepare ourselves, in terms of infrastructure, agriculture and health policies in particular, for some unavoidable changes in climate. Failing this, their effects will be devastating for future generations.

*

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), that I have chaired for two years now, was specifically created to help developing and emerging countries and within them, infra-national authorities, by funding their transition to a more sustainable development, particularly in terms of the twofold challenge of climate change, namely mitigation and adaptation.

The GEF was created in 1991 as a pilot programme initially involving the World Bank, UNDP and UNEP, and is an often little-known but deeply original instrument in multilateral development, in at least four ways:

- Firstly, the GEF has an extremely broad scope that not only encompasses climate change but also biodiversity protection, the fight against desertification and POP management, enabling it to roll out strategies that incorporate interactions between the main environmental issues. It is a significant asset, as we can all see, for example, that managing forests cannot be solely considered as a stock of carbon to be maximised as they also represent a major challenge for biodiversity. Similarly, it would not be wise to withdraw chemical substances damaging the ozone layer from the market without considering their ability to warm our climate.

- Secondly, the GEF's secretariat, made up of around sixty people, has recently had its role stepped up from simply managing the Facility. It now manages several of the UNFCCC's other funds, specialised in adapting to climate change and was selected last year to manage the Kyoto Protocol adaptation fund, making it an unrivalled pioneer in this new focal area.
- Thirdly, the GEF is the only operational financial instrument to be recognised by the three Rio Conventions and the Stockholm Convention on POPs. In practice, this means that the funding policies it conducts may have a certain legitimacy because they take account of the strategies drawn up by the bodies of these conventions.
- Lastly, - and this is the reason for its strength, and partly an explanation as to why it is not better-known - the GEF does not directly implement projects, but exclusively funds projects by ten approved multilateral agencies, among which feature UNDP and the World Bank. GEF's position, as one of the rare, if not the only example of institutional partnership between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, enables it to play a recognised role as a platform for cooperation, dialogue and drive between the main multilateral agencies working for the environment.

In total, the GEF, which is, however, managed by only a light sixty-strong secretariat, is the main multilateral player today for environmental protection, although its resources are not commensurate with funding requirements. Since 1991, it has supported over 2000 projects in 165 countries, providing a total sum of \$8 billion and generating over \$30 billion in co-funding. The GEF's most recent four-year replenishment dates back to 2006 and represents \$3.1 billion, of which one third is devoted to climate change (roughly \$250 million per year) and another third to biodiversity protection.

Let me give you a few actual examples of the GEF's funding for climate change initiatives. We were one of the first bodies to fund wind energy, enabling it, with the aid of other bodies, to take off in many developing countries. We have also supported a great number of photovoltaics and biomass projects, particularly in Brazil. We have funded demonstration pilot projects for hydrogen-powered buses, in China in particular, and have in recent years stressed improvements in energy efficiency in industrial and residential areas. Last year, for example, I launched a far-reaching global programme in partnership with UNEP and several multinationals to speed up the replacement of all incandescent light bulbs with processes that consume less energy.

It may interest you to know that the GEF regularly supports projects that rely on co-funding from regions or infra-national levels of government and/or projects that sometimes aim to strengthen their environmental expertise. As concerns chemicals, for example, we recently funded a \$3 million programme on PCP in the Zhejiang province of China with substantial local co-funding. There are countless examples of protecting international waters as sustainable management and pollution abatement in rivers or coastal areas involve in most cases close cooperation between several provinces in different countries. We also provided \$16 million for eight integrated coastal zone management sites in eastern Asia that have led to significant legislative and regulatory reforms (reform of land and sea use, initiatives stepped up to fight illegal fishing, etc.) in several provinces, including the Batangas and

Bataan provinces in the Philippines in particular. I could provide further examples in the GEF's various focal areas.

That was a quick overview of the GEF, which, as you can see, supports many projects in developing countries, without you being necessarily aware because its funding is passed on by other multilateral agencies, and often by your national governments!

It's now your turn to help the GEF! I am saying this in jest but I seriously need your help to ensure that the GEF replenishment negotiations starting in coming months are successful. The global economic context has of course deteriorated, but we must work together to convince governments that protecting the environment is a good way of using public funds, even in difficult periods when there is less room for manoeuvre. I would like to add that I am convinced that the traditional ODA budgets of States will not meet the funding needs and that it is therefore necessary come up with new types of innovative funding and, why not, direct contributions from the richest regions present today, as is already the case for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria [Catalonia].

I wish you every success for your discussions in the workshops and thank you for your attention.