



United Nations Environment Programme

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة • 联合国环境规划署
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

**STATEMENT OF YOLANDA KAKABADSE AT THE OPENING OF THE TWENTY SEVEN
MEETING OF THE GEF COUNCIL
WASHINGTON D.C.
8 NOVEMBER 2005**

Mr. Leonard Good and Co-chair,

Dear Council Members,

You will recall that at your last meeting, you requested from the STAP Chair an action plan for your review at this meeting, which would include steps to ensure the credibility of STAP review of projects across all operational programs.

Immediately after your June meeting, I convened a retreat of STAP members in Papallacta in Ecuador on 24-27 June 2005. The objective of this first retreat, convened by STAP since its establishment in 1991, was to examine how to better deliver scientific and technical advice to the GEF. The results of the STAP members' retreat, facilitated by a professional, were submitted to Len Good, CEO and Chairman, GEF, Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director, UNEP, as well as to Olav Kjørven, Director, Energy and Environment Group, UNDP, who attended the retreat on the last day.

The recommendations were further discussed with the Executive Coordinators of the three Implementing Agencies and the GEF Secretariat on 11 October 2005, at the STAP meeting held at the Bolger Center, Potomac, Maryland. The results of six months of an interactive and consultative process are contained in the information note entitled "Improving the effectiveness of STAP, Decisions by STAP, the GEF Secretariat, and the Implementing Agencies". To produce this paper before you, and secure the agreement of all our GEF partners in six months, is a great achievement. But this is only the beginning. We now need to translate our agreements into concrete measures in order to equip STAP to address the challenges ahead ensuring that the GEF partnership has the best available scientific and technical advice. I am very grateful to the GEF Secretariat and the

Implementing Agencies and in particular to the CEO and Chairman of the GEF Secretariat, and to the Executive Director of UNEP. I am confident that Len Good and Klaus Töpfer will expedite the arrangements for the administrative changes agreed at our retreat.

You will see from my report that I have not yet mentioned the Roster. However, we are discussing with our partners concrete measures that will make the roster review a process that we all want to see: transparent, effective, and independent. At our next meeting, I will report on these concrete measures, and steps to ensure the credibility of the STAP review of projects across all operations.

Before moving to other topics I would like to highlight that the changes we have proposed are budget neutral and supported by our partners, the GEF Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies.

I am also pleased to inform you about a detailed presentation on the implications of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA) made at the last meeting of STAP. The MEA has given us a wonderful photograph of the state of ecosystems, and provided us with a good tool to shift to policy making based on solid findings. Together with our partners, we decided, therefore, at our last meeting in October to hold a two day brainstorming session next April with invited experts to discuss the implications of the MEA on the fourth phase of the GEF.

As you can see STAP has continued working on the implementation of the work program. Advice to this Council is on sustainable land management of drylands. Looking further ahead to June 2006, advice to the Council will be on managed aquifer recharge, and liquid biofuels. The other themes we are working on are:

- Energy efficiency in new buildings.
- Modern biomass.

- Adaptation under the climate change regime.
- Indicators to monitor the progress of land degradation projects and guidelines for the development of land degradation projects in humid and semi-humid areas.
- Implications of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment for the GEF, including development of markets for ecosystem services.

As to our work since my last report in June , I am pleased to inform you that STAP, in accordance with its work programme, has successfully convened a workshop on liquid biofuels for the transport sector. The workshop, held from 29 August to 2 September and attended by 44 experts, made a number of recommendations that will be sent to the GEF Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies. STAP, at the request of the GEF Secretariat and in collaboration with UNESCO, also organized a workshop in New Delhi on 19-22 September on managed artificial recharge of ground water. Fifty experts participated in the meeting, and their work was instrumental in assessing the effectiveness of managed aquifer recharge in relation to sustainable groundwater management, such as water reuse and storage, and its potential impact to mitigate land degradation, conserve biodiversity, adapt to climate change, and address transboundary water management issues.

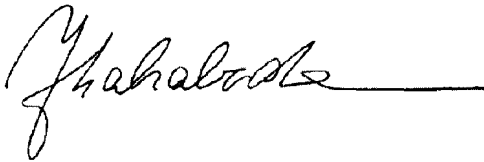
STAP also convened a workshop on genetically modified fish in collaboration with the World Fish Center in Penang, Malaysia attended by 41 experts between 17-21 October. The workshop will produce a book on the science of environmental biosafety for transgenic fish, which will serve, among other purposes, as a tool for building the scientific capacity of developing countries.

The Panel has already embarked in the preparation of the STAP triennial report to be submitted in accordance with the STAP mandate to the third GEF Assembly. The report will highlight pertinent scientific and technological environmental issues in the immediate and distant future relevant to GEF and its focal areas. We are also working on

improving our contribution to the work of monitoring and evaluation, which I consider a priority.

I am confident that STAP will enhance its effectiveness and will be better equipped to fulfil its role as part of the GEF partnership and will assist the GEF from a scientific and technical stand point to respond to the challenges of its fourth phase. I look forward to reporting to your next session the first results of our internal changes.

Thank you all,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yolanda Kakabadse', followed by a horizontal line.

Yolanda Kakabadse

STAP Chair