



**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT,  
CLIMATE CHANGE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**  
PO BOX PS-69

Palikir, Pohnpei 96941 Phone: (691) 320-8815 Fax: (691) 320-8936

---

On the Occasion of the 6<sup>th</sup> GEF ASSEMBLY  
Da Nang, Vietnam  
Statement made by Hon. Andrew Yatilman  
Secretary, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Emergency Management  
Government of the Federated States of Micronesia

*Check against delivery*

Chairman, Dr. Naoko Ishii, Ladies and Gentlemen

Being from a small island nation, it is always an humbling experience to address global bodies such as this Assembly and at times a worry whether the voice of a tiny island nation can be heard amongst the thundering voices of larger nations. A worry that some may say is unjustifiable when we wonder about the expansion of the GEF in size, scope and reach.

My small island nation should be encouraged that the GEF has grown big, has matured and is leading the way as an exemplary mechanism for other emerging financing mechanisms to follow. We are encouraged that the GEF is serving the needs of the global population and is seeing the world from a truly global perspective... and it should. However, in the back of my small island-nation mind, I have that worry whether I can be heard, whether our growth will cause us to neglect the most vulnerable, those on the frontlines...the little countries that could get lost in the bigger picture.

Mr. Chairman [madam chair], We are encouraged at times to see signs here and there, that voices of the smallest are sometimes heard.

We welcome GEF's focus on transformational change which is recognized to be achievable only through holistic/integrated approaches with partnerships, inclusive participation and with the most vulnerable in mind...an approach that we from small islands must always be mindful - where action on one side of an island has likely impact on the other side of the island. Furthermore, the holistic approach of "Impact Programming" is most encouraging as it has potential to bring about the necessary changes to drivers negatively affecting our Oceans and dependent island systems therein. Mr. Chairman, I join other small islands in continuing to call for recognition of capacity issues, particularly in relation to SIDS.

We Call for Recognition of SIDS limited capacity with regard to co-financing requirements of 1:6 which we hope will not impact on the ability to access resources.

The GEF plans for reduction in Focal Area allocations due to availability of other funding mechanisms, like the Green Climate Fund (GCF) should not be too quick to be translated to reduction in STAR allocations, particularly for SIDS. We must not assume SIDS are immediately accessing such funding mechanisms, as the hard-learned lessons regarding accessibility of new funding mechanisms must not be forgotten.

An effective GEF measure recognizing capacity constraints in the form of GEF OFP SUPPORT FUND under the Country Support Programme had been useful, and it is unfortunate that the GEF no longer recognizes such need of OFPs of small administrations. We hope consideration can be given to provide similar support to OFPs who are the supporting arm of the GEF in our countries.

Finally on the capacity front, we depend heavily on our Implementing Agencies ability to take us quickly through Project development. However, delays experienced despite early approval of PIFs can be very discouraging, especially when such projects take up a substantial amount of our STAR allocation.

To conclude, I join others in expressing our sincere thanks to Dr. Ishii and her team at the secretariat for organizing this Assembly and finally on behalf of my delegation, we extend our sincerest gratitude to the government and people of Vietnam, especially the beautiful city of Da Nang for their hospitality.

Thank you.