

GEF CEO: Transformational Change Needed to Address Climate Change Threat

GEF STAP report warns that incremental strategies aren't working; planet headed for 6 degree temperature increase; GEF to step up its multi-sectoral approach

WASHINGTON, DC, March 20, 2013 – Incremental approaches are failing to prevent global climate change, and a systemic approach is required to reverse worrisome trends, the head of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) said today.

Dr. Naoko Ishii, CEO and Chairperson of the GEF, cited a report by the GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) as the latest indicator that global efforts are failing to address climate change. The report cites research indicating that a warming of 2 degrees Celsius could be reached by 2030 and that if current emission patterns continue, the planet could experience a warming of 6 degrees Celsius by the end of the century.

"The GEF has supported developing countries to take action on climate change," Dr. Ishii said at a joint event hosted by the GEF, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics & the Environment. *"But I will be the first to admit that we have more work to do if we and the international community are to catalyze the transformational change needed to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions."*

Dr. Thomas Lovejoy, the STAP Chairman and Biodiversity Chair at the Heinz Center, said, "Against the backdrop of relentlessly rising global temperatures, the STAP report points to many opportunities for reducing climate change emissions. The global change challenge will require transformative change in present systems and policies linked to global food supply, urbanization, building designs, and sustainable development. It is a formidable task, but we now have before us a clear roadmap."

Both the STAP report and the discussion, held at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), focused on engineering a transformational shift to low-carbon economies in the developing world. The STAP report, *Climate Change: A Scientific Assessment for the GEF*, calls for the GEF to move away from single-sector approaches to climate change and to support more comprehensive strategies encompassing policy development, innovation, reduction in energy demand, deployment of low-carbon options, and enhancement of developing country preparations for a new global climate regime.

Speakers at the AAAS event included Heinz Center President Conn Nugent; Paven Sukhdev, visiting fellow at Yale University, former head of UNEP's Green Economy Initiative, and author of *Corporation 2020*; Dr. Ralph Sims, professor at Massey University's School of Engineering and Advanced Technology, member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and a STAP member specializing in climate change mitigation; and Dr. Rosina Bierbaum, professor of natural resources and environmental policy at the University of Michigan and a member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

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About the Global Environment Facility

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) unites 182 countries in partnership with international institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs), and the private sector to address global environmental issues while supporting national sustainable development initiatives. Today the GEF is the largest public funder of projects to improve the global environment. An independently operating financial organization, the GEF provides grants for projects related to biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer, and persistent organic pollutants.

Since 1991, GEF has achieved a strong track record with developing countries and countries with economies in transition, providing \$11.5 billion in grants and leveraging \$57 billion in co-financing for over 3,215 projects in over 165 countries. Through its Small Grants Programme (SGP), the GEF has also made more than 16,030 small grants directly to civil society and community based organizations, totaling \$653.2 million. For more information, visit www.thegef.org.

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