**Session 14: Key Recommendations from Science Policy Conference Room 3**

**Objective:**

• To report the findings of the science-policy interface working groups back to the plenary.

**Expected Outputs:**

• Consolidated key recommendations for GEF, other agencies, and their stakeholders regarding the effective use of science to enhance the management of transboundary waters.

Moderator: Ivan Zavadsky, GEF Secretariat

Rapporteurs: Thomas Chiramba, UNEP, and Patrick Weiler, IW:LEARN Project

**1. Chair/Rapporteur, The Role of IW-related Science in Support of Regional Cooperation**

* Overall observation that the 1995 GEF IW goal built into new GEF Strategy, provides a sound foundation for collective Transboundary action by enabling agreement between North/South. Good base going forward for GEF 6
* Two major presentations, Raymond on GEF and Lake Victoria environment, and East African community, catalytic role of the GEF was food for thought for the group, and a presentation from Cletus Springer which outlined how regional bodies interlink and what roles they have, with the GEF being supportive of dialogue.
* Next day it was discussed in group of 20 people which managed to draw on lessons learned from the projects.
* 1. Scientific evidence for Transboundary stocks and flows is catalytic in generating evidence and incentives for collective action
* 2. Non-GEF catalytic interventions in the political economic sphere, and environmental diplomacy can create regional cooperation opportunities
	+ From the technical domain to the politic/economic domain
	+ This topic came up because regions with political strife are difficult to intervene in. For upstream countries, it may be a tool for more systematic TDA/SAP approaches and for the next stage of the GEF, it can serve as a centre for dialogue in between countries.
* 3. Repositioning GEF to the realities of regionalization
	+ Leveraging regional economic institutions is key to ensure sustainability beyond the catalytic GEF intervention.
		- Example of how to engage the ASEAN, who have been involved in Transboundary marine systems for many years. We should focus on using their leverage as political clout into these processes.
	+ TDA/SAP could be augmented to widen the evidence based underpinning policy impact and post-project up scaling of GEF results.
* Long list of other contributions to be captured in the meetings notes. Work in partnership for economic aspects.

**2. Chair/Rapporteur, Analysis (TDAs), Progress Monitoring (SAPs) and Indicators**

* Key messages
	+ Review the IW Tracking Tool (TT) and its indicators to get a consensus on this tool. We need to keep in mind that it is constantly evolving to face new challenges. Should we consider regional indictors? Differing forms of Interministerial Committees? Should there be a scientific reviewing of the TT and its indicators?
	+ That Post project monitoring is essential and needs to be streamlined into the national ministries.
	+ Revision of the National focal point terms to enable their ongoing engagement in project implementation (more active role to mainstream)
* Projects that can fill the gaps
	+ The TWAP was identified as a key project to help develop indicators and address prioritization and potential research areas
* Three key recommendations for research to be considered by the GEF STAP
	+ Plastics
	+ Development of rapid assessment/status/proxy environmental indicators
	+ Valuation of Economic services as a vehicle of the science policy interface
		- Seen as key to bridging the gap
* Following up the discussion, will continue to flow the discussions at the next GEF International Waters Conference
* Next steps = how to:
	+ Mainstream the discussion see above
	+ See how to use IWLEARN, and its Project Management Manual to get experiences and indicators embedded in an easy to access fashion
	+ The Session participants agreed to continue the discussion.

**3. Chair/Rapporteur, Effective Knowledge Mobilization**

* There were short presentations on the structure and content of the IW:LERARN and IW:SCIENCE projects. These presentations looked into and discussed the components, then went into a wider discussion about moving scientific info into policy changes.
	+ GEF IW to be congratulated about doing something about information in projects, both projects had difficulty in finding the science in projects. Therefore, we need to make sure it is properly captured so it can be used in the future.
* Some key recommendations:
	+ 1. GEF should develop an effective learning strategy, including a meta-database of scientific knowledge that also should capture evaluations of the effectiveness of governance structures, and the transfer of science into project governance and policy. There needs to be official guidance on GEF IW learning budgets (use of 1%)
		- To allow it to profit from successes and failures of projects so others can benefit
		- Will at least capture what exists and where it is
		- Meant to include social sciences as well
	+ 2. Data generated in GEF Projects must be publically available and permanently archived. Corporate policy for data sharing needs to be built into the legally binding project document.
		- Needs to be implemented effectively, even if already official policy, so that national scientific agencies and scientists in the projects would be bound to operate in this manner.
		- Countries engaged in the projects will have the responsibility to maintain these databases in the future.
		- Making a real effort to do this will serve as a valuable capacity building mechanism in countries, this problem not unique to GEF projects, some parts of community have gotten better at ensuring data is available, GEF can play an important role in moving this forward.
	+ 3. GEF has to take a more active role in providing knowledge mobilization training to new projects and providing linkages to partners with knowledge of best practices in the area.
		- Need to influence management and policy decisions
		- Not good at communicating, tendency of putting people in between the two
		- If GEF better understands the process of KM, it could guide its projects to a better science policy exchange
	+ 4. There are advantages in building a community among project participates and GEF should continue to encourage the use of the IW:LEARN platform for interaction between members and access contact information (including CoPs).
		- Can be very useful. IW:LEARN already has CoPs, simply a way of connecting people. Hard to get info of ppl, that way you can find out across the project who is working there. Certainly within projects there needs to be more transparency and ability to contact each member.

**4. Chair/Rapporteur, Linking Science to Policy: Strengthening the uptake of scientific findings into policy and practice**

* Several speakers at the beginning including the honorable minister. Getting science down to the lower levels was emphasized. 4 groups, each with 4 topics, one theme and maybe a second
* 1. North south divide (needs/interests) & the challenge of complexity
	+ Modeling needs to adapt tools and models for temperate climates and developed economies.
	+ Data acquisition/Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) – technical and institutional innovation, and open source data/journal, concern over the cost of IPR.
	+ Capacity building – GEF actions – North-South and South-South partnership, needs developing, and to build science capacity.
* 2. Policy miscommunications/misperceptions have serious consequences
	+ GEF Actions – Developed FAQ for GEF IW to identify and assess misconceptions, design project communication strategies to address them
* 3. Policy-science dialogue is a two way communication
	+ Problem of sectoral silos and disciplines in science
	+ GEF Actions –
		- Create platforms for dialogue between scientist and policy makers as well as stakeholders
		- Facilitate message uptake by targeted social media
		- Carry out focused interdisciplinary assessments forecasts and research
		- Present results in digestible format
* 4. Science revolution – one blue planet idea
	+ Challenges
		- creditability quality of info – misuse of info QA
		- access to data - bandwidth varies, assumption that people are willing to engage, shouldn’t make that assumption, resilience of info system and flooding systems
	+ GEF Actions – for the next generation
		- New technologies and approaches to address them
		- Proposal for a scoping study to address it
			* Public awareness through social media and networking, games
			* Awareness through early warning systems (through mobile phones)
			* Project communication
				+ High carbon footprint through travelling could be improved through webinars that could also include more stakeholders
			* Data access and processing
				+ Aggregating data captured widely through various means.
				+ Provide a toolkit to guide mapping
				+ Cloud computing
				+ Private sector finance for data sharing
				+ Access to diverse tools like remote sensing.

Comments from participants:

* Christopher – indicators group – the use of GEF IWLEARN for ongoing exchange activities, further discussion in between the projects could be included in the upcoming IWLEARN regional workshops.
* Salif – love to see this continue, one way is to try to build more robust methodology to capture the elements of how to continue the dialogue. Not fully being used to communicate, not fully tapping the potential, and should be more active. Should make sure that we keep this alive.

Questions: key outputs of the conference is how to make it better

* Discussion about improving the science dialogue, need to make it more visible, GEF in a dilemma, implementation knowledge for action. What GEF should look for is to attract science into it. Want to publish for fame, but for function in GEF. If the GEF is in a brokering position, this role needs to be institutionalized.
* Joseph Alcamo – would be useful to encapsulate this into specific actions. Tighten up the scientific procedure with GEF IW, how scientists provide specific input, to formalize the process at various intervals through a foresight process, how to establish links with other organizations, thinking of the kinds of institutions that could be added.
* Chris – how to engage science policy, Pacific IWRM have done a 2-3 page pamphlet organized by the ministries, to ensure you get project result and gets into ministries, nice complementary way to what the BCC said yesterday.
* Laurence Mee – sense of disappointment – areas of science that we can’t get off the shelf that we need to improve the projects/programs. Haven’t identified them well yet. The foresight analysis needs to be developed in a way it is pertinent, project is not the right one to innovate, needs to come from higher up. We should standardize so that we can build and assess on the global level. We need to identify where they cannot be taken off the shelves and a means to solve the gaps. PES – very useful to demystify the incremental costs. Blue carbon is an essential link for stuff in coastal systems and Climate Change. We touched on these things but we need to think more on it, develop it. Who’s going to develop and how to make the mechanism. We have the need, and capability to take this on.
	+ Jacob Granit – we have a whole host of good ideas in front of us, making it a little overwhelming to react immediately. Seems that we are not designed to have a strong scientific component, need to recommend in the next cycle of policy design that science is integrated better. New mechanisms for foresight, but who to do what? What we should do is work with some of the think tanks already in place. How do we tap that knowledge into our work? Has to be adopted by the countries.
	+ PES – nice idea, easy to say, experience is that it’s easier to say than do. There are a shortage of environmental economists, and the message is about giving data, has to be planned in from the start of the project for this to be effective.
		- Need to get guidance from the STAP
* Peter Sale – talk of silos – that are barriers to communication – GEF should open up doors to the scientific community, will make better science, relatively small changes in how business is done, will have huge changes. Needs to be seen as high value for the scientific community.
* Thomas – in terms of knowledge generation, link up with the thinktanks, how to bring together and benefit from them. We need also to think about how to communicate with decision makers.
* Use of new technology – there are things that we don’t envision as possible, we need to harvest for communication in science. Important that we use webspaces to enhance communication and help North-South communication and identify and diffuse results transparently for policy makers. This all came up in little bits in the past three days. We need to bring on board the people that are under 20 years old, learn from them and practice on how to develop it.
* Need for foresight analysis for groundwater resources, lots of underlying assumptions have changed. Can cooperate with the World Water Assessment Program, opportunity to collaborate (with IW:LEARN).
* This information will be heading towards the reports – thinktanks and forecasting issues. Some new ideas were generated at the Working Group level, all should come into the outcomes of this. Save the next steps for the next panel.