

Name

Alfred M. Duda, Ph.D., GEF Senior Advisor, Retired

E-Mail

alfredduda@gmail.com

Abstract Title

Introduction to Science Policy Interface and Recommended GEF Processes

Abstract

The GEF International Waters (IW) focal area represents \$1.3 billion in GEF grants along with over \$7 billion in co-financing for projects addressing transboundary surface, ground water, and Large Marine Ecosystems and their coasts. 170 countries, 149 of the GEF eligible, have worked together on their shared transboundary concerns and opportunities over the 20 years of the GEF. More than any GEF area, IW is so very complex, politically charged, and in need of processes that harness the science community so that complexity can be broken down into manageable chunks and governments do not politically skew nor ignore important transboundary issues.

The aim of this Science/Policy Interface Session is to promote discussion among GEF IW practitioners about the recommended processes and key factors that can help to inform management decision-making at all levels from the multi-country transboundary scale to national sector scale to subnational entities ranging from provinces and watersheds to communities. What has worked, what can be useful? Another overarching scale--the global scale--is also discussed with the GEF Secretariat commissioning a number of initiatives. This keynote outlines processes and key factors associated with GEF IW projects over the years to bring science, developing country scientists, and science processes to help engage transboundary waters. The processes range from: the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) to science advisory bodies for the TDA, science advisory bodies for transboundary basin and LME institutions, transboundary science conferences in IW projects, activity centers, GEF targeted research projects, M & E indicator development and sampling requirements, co-management based on scientific extension services, and adaptive management strategies utilizing periodic TDAs or state of the water environment reporting to catalyze action.

On the global scale, global assessments such as GEF GIWA or the GEF TWAP, effectiveness reviews such as undertaken by the GEF EO or the GEF IW Science Project, global social science learning and capacity building like GEF IW:LEARN, GEF global targeted research or methodology development IW projects, and work of the GEF STAP all help put a focus on science. Key features can also be listed and include first and foremost a project manager/CTA with credibility, fearlessness, and political savvy as well as GEF agency backstopping expertise with a stubborn streak to enforce GEF recommended processes, adequate budget from all sources, and stronger commitments from ALL GEF agencies to participate in the GEF IW Task Force and in GEF IW events. If GEF agencies and their project managers don't walk the talk, inherent complexity and political interference in transboundary projects will ensure that science and the local science community will be missing from projects and decision-makers will throw their hands up in confusion and not move from the status quo.

Keywords

Science Policy Interface, Improved Decisionmaking, Participation, Social Sciences, GEF International Waters Processes, TDA, SAP