



talking Points



April 2008

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A Letter from the CEO



Dear Colleague:

Here in Washington, warm weather is nearly here and the cherry blossoms are in bloom. At the GEF, we have a busy and productive spring ahead: the first meeting of the Adaptation Fund Board, preparations for the upcoming Biodiversity COP in Bonn, the GEF Evaluation workshop in Egypt and, of course, the April Council meeting.

The Adaptation Fund Board Meeting

Last December at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Bali, the GEF was entrusted with the management of the Adaptation Fund- a key initiative that has the potential to transform the way we finance environmental projects. We shall follow the guidance of the UNFCCC and the Adaptation Fund Board as we work closely with you to build on our past successes with adaptation. The Adaptation Fund Board held its first meeting in Bonn from March 26 to 28 and we expect projects to begin before the end of the year.

Biodiversity COP 9 in Bonn (May 19th - 30th, 2008)

Never has the challenge or opportunity to preserve the world's most unique and threatened areas been greater. Over the centuries nearly half of the Earth's original forest cover has disappeared, cleared mostly during the past century, according to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Ironically, it is the climate change issue which is now helping decision makers refocus on preserving forests, which can act as a carbon sink and help slow

environmental damage both locally and globally. We now have a unique chance to demonstrate the importance and relevance of biological diversity to the long-term health of the planet by linking forest biodiversity conservation and climate mitigation.

These are just some of the issues that the GEF will be addressing at the upcoming biodiversity COP9 in Bonn, which will be hosted by Germany.

International GEF Workshop on Evaluating Climate Change and Development

Our Evaluation Office is organizing a workshop this May in Alexandria, Egypt to share experiences in evaluating projects and programs aimed at cross-cutting issues of climate change and development. In addition to identifying current best practices and methodologies in mitigation and adaptation projects and programs, this important workshop will address the challenges that lie ahead in the evaluation community.

Discussions will provide a platform for institutional leadership and underline the importance of this leadership in coping with climate change and accelerating development around the world.

April Council Meeting

On the agenda will be a number of important items to discuss. Some highlights include: an update on our Small Grants Program, progress on the implementation of the RAF, an evaluation of our annual country portfolio and our FY 09-10 Business Plan, including a discussion on our corporate budget in the year ahead...

We will also receive a report from the STAP chair and provide council members with details on a strategic program designed to scale up investment in the transfer of environmentally-friendly technologies.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the April Council meeting and perhaps in Bonn. As always, your comments and ideas are very welcome.

With best wishes,

,

Monique Barbut
CEO and Chairperson
Global Environment Facility

II

Stories from the Agencies

a. Biodiversity Mainstreaming Protects South Africa's threatened Grasslands

Innovating thinking and the formation of cooperative partnerships with industry and municipalities has helped the National Grasslands Biodiversity Programme in South Africa achieve early successes in mainstreaming biodiversity concerns into productive sectors. The project aims to remove barriers to mainstreaming by building institutional and policy-level capacity, correcting market failures and demonstrating how different production sector practices can be adapted to achieve biodiversity management.

In the short time since its inception, the GEF grasslands project has significantly increased the body of knowledge on the biome - the second largest in South Africa, occupying 29 percent of the country's land territory. The grasslands are an important repository of globally significant biodiversity and a rich storehouse of floristic, avian and invertebrate diversity. It is exceptionally rich in floristic diversity with a high proportion of indigenous species, second only to the Cape Floristic Region. By applying systematic conservation planning, the project has helped identify the critical biodiversity areas that must be secured to maintain biodiversity and ecosystem services. This knowledge helps inform land use decision-making and directs development away from sensitive biodiversity areas.

The grasslands project, which is being implemented by UNDP with the help of a diverse group of local partners, has been necessary because South Africa's grasslands, along with other temperate grasslands across the globe, are critically threatened. An estimated 30 percent of the area has already been irreversibly transformed, two of the biome's 80 vegetation types are listed as critically endangered, 18 as endangered and 27 as vulnerable, while 83 percent of the grasslands' river ecosystems are ranked as threatened, with 48 percent critically endangered. However, less than two percent of the grasslands are currently designated protected areas, and even these are not considered representative of diversity across the biome.

By encouraging stakeholders to buy into a common goal, the four-year US\$ 45.9 million project (GEF grant: US\$ 8.65 million) has already, in its first year, secured the participation of important economic sectors, such as forestry, agriculture, coal mining, and urban development.

For more information, please contact: Jay Dowle; jay.dowle@undp.org

b. Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand

The UNEP-GEF project entitled *Reversing Environmental Degradation Trends in the South China Sea and Gulf of Thailand* is a \$34 million, 7-country project, addressing degradation from habitat loss, land-based pollution and over-exploitation of fisheries resources. Amongst its many innovations this project has made use of a new technology to enhance global awareness of the projects' interventions.

A complex undertaking, the South China Sea project was launched in 2002 to create an environment at the regional level, in which collaboration and partnership in addressing environmental problems of the South China Sea, between all stakeholders, and at all levels is fostered and encouraged; and to enhance the capacity of the participating governments to integrate environmental considerations into national development planning.

Based on Google's online Geographical Information System (GIS) known as Google Earth, the project utilized an innovative coding approach known as Keyhole Markup Language (KML) to create a permanent layer for the project on the Google Earth system. This work was featured in the official Google news and showcased by Google in its *Google Earth Outreach Showcase* - <http://earth.google.com/outreach/showcase.html>.

This is the first time in the history of the GEF that such a tool has been used to highlight achievements and successes of a project and to bring the world's attention to global environmental problems in a specific region. The layer developed by this project uses Google Earth as the geographical search engine to provide an in-depth analysis of the South China Sea project and its' many interventions. The work was highlighted by Google in its official news as "*a great example of how to connect with a wide audience*".

By creating a KML layer on Google Earth, the project is able to provide a platform that allows users to the site to interactively access information on government ministries and departments, research institutions and universities involved in the implementation of the project activities. In addition, visitors to the site can also access information and data on over 135 mangrove, coral reef, seagrass, and wetlands sites of the South China Sea studied during the project.

For more information, please visit the project website at www.unepscs.org; or write to:

pernetta@un.org

c. Supporting Regional Efforts to Reduce PCB Releases through Improved Electrical Equipment Management in Francophone Africa

Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) are listed in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants which seeks to control and, in time, eliminate their production, trade and use, and to ensure that their treatment as waste is carried out in an environmentally sound manner.

An assessment of national PCB preliminary inventory data indicates that francophone African countries served by the Basel Convention Regional Centre (BCRC-Afr) in Dakar Senegal hold an estimated 4,785 transformers containing PCBs and a further 17,362 transformers in which the dielectric fluid is contaminated by PCBs at a level greater than the Convention limit of 50 mg/kg.

The public electrical utilities are estimated to hold in excess of 80% of this equipment but are hampered in their efforts to improve management standards because access to international services is difficult and expensive. Furthermore, the relatively small market for environmentally sound waste management in each country inhibits local investment by competent service providers. Current local waste management of PCB equipment results in uncontrolled PCB releases from unprotected metal reclamation or, worse, the selling of PCB oils for local open uses. Such uses pose significant health and environmental risks and are not permitted under the Stockholm and Basel Conventions.

The need to address these risks by pooling together the limited capacity and resources of individual countries via a sub-regional approach has been identified as a priority in the Environment Action Plan of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

UNEP and the BCRC-Afr, working with the Secretariat of the Basel Convention and the West Africa Power Pool, are currently designing a project to address this priority through a harmonised and concerted effort by 14 participating countries. The project will build capacity and harmonize national efforts in order to:

- Implement environmentally sound management of PCB equipment in service to remove it from high-risk locations, to reduce releases of PCBs and to prevent cross-contamination of non-PCB equipment; and
- Provide viable and sustainable opportunities for the environmentally-sound management and treatment of PCB wastes.

The project seeks to transform market conditions in the region and provide an opportunity for private-sector service providers to deliver cost-effective and environmentally-sound waste management services for PCB oils, equipment and wastes while building national and regional capacities.

For more information, please contact: David Piper, UNEP DGEF Geneva,
DPiper@chemicals.unep.ch

III

News from Small Grants Programme (SGP)

GEF SGP Recent Awards

Cuba: GEF SGP Grantee Receives the CNN Heroes Award

In December 2007, Ms. Irania Martinez Garcia, manager of the SGP project on the reduction of dioxin and furan emissions in Guantanamo, received the CNN Heroes Award. The brief on her award explained that: “Irania Martinez Garcia lost her daughter to leukemia and was convinced the disease was caused by environmental toxins from the burning of plastic and hospital waste in a dump nearby. Few thought she’d be able to turn the toxic dump site into an eco-friendly haven, but now Garcia is considered a local hero in Guantanamo. She has helped hundreds of local residents learn how to grow food efficiently while using organic and sustainable materials from the dump and from their own trash.”



Belize: GEF SGP National Coordinator is James A. Waight Conservation Awardee

On 18 February 2008, the National Coordinator of SGP Belize, Mr. Phillip Balderamos, received the **James A. Waight Conservation Award**. Mr. Balderamos was awarded for his commitment to bird conservation which spans some 25 years, his unwavering advocacy and educational efforts for sustainable

natural resources management and for his contribution to community involvement in conservation efforts.



Tanzania: GEF SGP Project Wins Wisions Award

In March 2008, a community-based organization in Tanzania implementing the “Water for Energy and Energy for Water” project supported by the Luxembourg- and Norway- funded UNDP Community Water Initiative, won the **Wisions Award**. The award is for promoting good practices on using either water as a driving agent for renewable energy (e.g. small hydro schemes, wave and tidal power plants) or the provision of clean and safe drinking water by renewable energy (e.g. solar driven desalination, water or wastewater treatment/reuse systems, groundwater pumping or irrigation systems).



Earlier in 2007, another GEF SGP CBO-implemented water project, won the **Commission on Sustainable Development Award** as one of the best practices in sustainable development in Africa.

Iran: GEF SGP project is Wetland Champion Awardee

On World Wetlands Day (February 2, 2008, the GEF SGP project, “Rehabilitation of the Sirangoli and Hassanlou Ramsar Site Wetlands through Community Participation” received the national **Wetland's Champion** Award as one of the most successful experiences relating to optimized preservation of wetland ecosystems and promotion of wetland preservation culture across the country.



News from the GEF Evaluation Office

News on African Country Portfolio Evaluations

The Evaluation Office undertook four Country Portfolio Evaluations (CPE's) in Africa between September 2007 and March 2008 covering Benin, Cameroon, Madagascar and South Africa. The CPE's respond to three questions: relevance of GEF support to countries' sustainable development and environmental priorities as well as to the GEF's mandate; efficiency of GEF implementation; and results from GEF support. These countries were selected to cover a range of country contexts, with target countries reflecting a mix of environmental allocations, geography and wealth.

The findings of the Africa CPE's pointed towards a number of positive results, including achievements at the global environmental level, particularly in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use; catalytic and replication effects of results in terms of capacity, public awareness and enabling environment and relevance to national environmental priorities, particularly in the areas of biodiversity and international waters.

The Africa CPE's also identified two main shortcomings which need action from the GEF Council: (1) limitations in the GEF Focal Point mechanisms and (2) the need for further integration among focal areas when preparing and implementing projects to maximize global environmental benefits.

Findings from three of the four evaluations have been synthesized in the first Annual Country Portfolio Evaluation report to be presented by the Evaluation Office to the GEF Council in April 2008. Individual CPE's, as well as the synthesis report, are available on the Evaluation Office web site (www.gefeo.org)

Moving forward, CPE's continue to play an increasingly important role in capturing aggregate portfolio results and country-level implementation experiences. A total of 12 CPE's are proposed per replenishment period and in FY 09 a further two CPE's will be carried out.

For more information, please contact:
c.volonte@thegef.org

On the Astana Consultation

As a regional contribution towards the upcoming International Workshop in Alexandria, Egypt this May, the Evaluation Office organized a Central Asian consultation on evaluating climate change and development, which took place at

the end of 2007. Climate change specialists from Central Asian countries and Slovakia gathered together in Astana, Kazakhstan to share regional experiences in the evaluation of climate change projects and programs. Opening remarks were made by Mr. Alzhan Braliev, Vice-Minister of Environmental Protection of Kazakhstan and GEF Operational Focal Point. The GEF Evaluation Office was represented by Oswaldo Gómez R, on behalf of its Director, Mr. Robert D. van den Berg. Speaking on behalf of the International Program Evaluation Network (IPEN) active in Central Asia, Mrs. Jamila Asanova welcomed this first stage of collaboration with the GEF Evaluation Office.

A summary of presentations and discussions will soon be available in a report on the current status of environmental evaluation in Central Asia.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.esdevaluation.org> or contact Oswaldo Gómez; OGomezRodriguez@thegef.org

The Annual Performance Report 2007

The Annual Performance Report (APR) presents a detailed account of some aspects of project results and the processes that may affect these results. Additionally, in the 2007 APR, the Evaluation Office includes an assessment of relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development activities in GEF projects.

The preliminary findings of the APR for fiscal year (FY) 2007 were shared with the GEF agencies in an inter-agency meeting in March 2008.

Key conclusions and findings of the APR 2007 were:

- On achievement of outcomes, 73 percent of the completed projects of the FY 2007 cohort were rated in the satisfactory range. This is close to the 75 percent target accorded in the GEF-4 replenishment agreement.
- For every dollar of GEF financing, 2.6 dollars of cofinancing had been promised. Implementing agencies reported that 1.9 of the promised 2.6 dollars materialized.
- The strong association between quality at entry of M&E arrangements and actual quality of monitoring during implementation, first identified for the fiscal 2006 cohort, was confirmed for the fiscal 2007 cohort as well.
- There has been significant improvement in the overall quality of the terminal evaluation reports. However, further improvements are required in reporting of financial information.
- The results of capacity development activities in completed GEF projects are generally positive and in some areas significant. However, a common underlying weakness in the projects is the tendency to plan and execute

training as a “one-shot” solution with little consideration for the national or regional context.

- The GEF Agencies are on the right track to address the greenhouse gas emissions of their internal operations. However, most are in early stages of developing and adopting a comprehensive greenhouse gas management strategy.

For more information, please contact a.zazueta@thegef.org

Midterm review of the Results Allocation Framework (RAF)

The midterm review (MTR) of the GEF’s Results Allocation Framework (RAF) has begun and is progressing well. While it is too early to assess the long-term impact of the RAF and the projects approved under RAF funds, there are many aspects that can already be evaluated. The review will, for example, cover the effects of the RAF on stakeholder roles, pipeline development and changes to the emerging portfolio. Any mid-term evaluation will normally assess if original design is still relevant, if implementation is progressing, and if any changes are needed to reach the objectives.

Over the next few months, the review team will hold sessions on the midterm review during five sub-regional workshops, to obtain feedback from GEF focal points. The review team is also working with the GEF NGO network to reach the NGO community.

During May-June 2008, the GEF Evaluation office will also conduct an electronic survey among a broad range of stakeholders, including GEF Focal Points, field project staff, NGOs and Agency staff. The survey will be sent out electronically; and can also be accessed through the GEF Evaluation Office website www.gefeo.org.

You can find updates on the progress of the MTR, including the Evaluation Matrix and the composition of the review team on the GEF Evaluation Office website under ‘RAF mid-term review’.

For more information or suggestions, please contact rafevaluation@thegef.org or Siv Tokle at stokle@thegef.org.

The International Workshop on Evaluating Climate Change and Development

The International Workshop on Evaluating Climate Change and Development is scheduled to take place from May 10th-13th and will be hosted by the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, in Alexandria, Egypt. The workshop, organized by the GEF Evaluation Office, is sponsored by several donors and supporters. Participants of various

backgrounds and expertises will attend to discuss the cross-cutting issues of climate change and development evaluation.

In addition to identifying current best practices and methodologies in mitigation and adaptation projects and programs, the workshop aims to draw out relevant gaps and challenges that lie ahead in the evaluation community. The agenda also reflects the desire to create independent regional evaluation networks which will share knowledge and grow in the years ahead, and will also highlight the effects of climate change on Egypt. Discussions will also provide a platform for institutional leadership on the importance of climate change and development around the world.

Registration is now closed, with about 250 expected participants. For a full list of sponsors, the current workshop agenda, and other relevant information please visit: <http://www.esdevaluation.org>.

Country Support Program News

Support available to GEF National Focal Points

In GEF 4, several sources of support are available to GEF Focal Points to help them strengthen their country's participation in the GEF. These include the following:

GEF National Dialogues: The GEF National Dialogue Initiative continues to assist up to 12 countries per year in organizing and undertaking national multi-stakeholder dialogues on GEF and global environmental issues. The dialogues, designed to respond to specific country needs and challenges, have helped increase awareness of global environmental issues, strengthen linkages and partnerships among key environmental actors and achieve consensus on the way forward on priority topics.

More information on National Dialogues is available at:

http://www.gefcountrysupport.org/report_detail.cfm?projectId=164

Direct Annual Support for GEF Focal Points: Annual funding of \$8,000 is made available by the GEF to support Focal Points in outreach and awareness-raising, consultations with stakeholders, and development of databases and other activities to improve tracking of the GEF portfolio and pipeline at the country level.

More information on Direct Annual Funding is available at:

http://www.gefcountrysupport.org/report_detail.cfm?projectId=161

Sub-regional Exchange Workshops for GEF Focal Points: The Country Support Program (CSP) organizes a series of Sub-Regional Exchange Workshops for GEF Focal Points annually. The workshops bring together GEF Operational and Political Focal Points along with representatives of the GEF Secretariat and Agencies to discuss current issues and policies of the GEF in relation to the needs and priorities of countries in the region.

More information on the Sub-Regional Workshops, including presented materials and documents and workshop reports, is available at:

http://www.gefcountrysupport.org/report_detail.cfm?projectId=162

CSP Knowledge Facility: The Country Support Program manages a web-based Knowledge Facility targeted at meeting the knowledge needs of GEF Focal Points. The Knowledge Facility (www.gefcountrysupport.org) was launched in May 2007 and provides several key features, including: updated information on the GEF's

policies and procedures, knowledge materials targeted to needs of Focal Points, information on sources of support for GEF Focal Points and guidance on how to access such support.

For more information on the Knowledge Facility and its features please visit the site: www.gefcountrysupport.org

For more information, please contact: Tehmina Akhtar, Knowledge Management Advisor, GEF Dialogue Initiative and Country Support Programme, tehmina.akhtar@undp.org

VI

New Focal Points/Council Members

Name	Country	Category
Mr. Ndiaye Cheikh Sylla	Senegal	Adaptation Fund Board Member/Operational Focal Point/Political Focal Point
Ms. Lamed Mendoza	Panama	Alternate Member
Mr. Long Rithirak	Cambodia	Alternate Member
Mr. Sékou Mohamed Camara	Guinea	Alternate Member/Operational Focal Point
Mr. João Raimundo Lopes	Guinea-Bissau	Alternate Member/Operational Focal Point
Mr. Emil Ferjancic	Slovenia	Alternate Member/Operational Focal Point/Political Focal Point
Ms. Jan Henderson	New Zealand	Council Member
Prof. Alfred Oteng-Yeboah	Ghana	Council Member
Mr. Andre Odenbreit	Brazil	Council Member
Mr. Nguyen Van Tai	Vietnam	Council Member/Operational Focal Point
Mr. Phillip Weech	Bahamas	Council Member/Operational Focal Point
Mr. Agus Purnomo	Indonesia	Council Member/Operational Focal Point

Mr. Jozef Buys	Belgium	Council Member/Political Focal Point/Donor Participants (Replenishment)
Mr. Isidro Callizaya	Bolivia	Operational Focal Point
Mr. Rence Sore	Solomon Islands	Operational Focal Point
H.E. Luis Alberto Ferrate	Guatemala	Operational Focal Point
Mr. Jose Maria Musmeci	Argentina	Operational Focal Point
Mr. Tovondrasa Andriamanganiaina Rakotobe	Madagascar	Operational Focal Point
Mr. Russell Nari	Vanuatu	Operational Focal Point
Ms. Zoraya M. Bucarelli	Dominican Republic	Operational Focal Point
Mr. Andrew Yatilman	Micronesia	Operational Focal Point
Mr. Volodymyr Bevza	Ukraine	Operational Focal Point
Mr. Gaourang Mamadi N'Garkelo	Chad	Operational Focal Point/Political Focal Point
H.E. Zaal Gamtsemlidze	Georgia	Political Focal Point
His Excellency Mahmoud Camara	Guinea	Political Focal Point
Mrs. Malie 'Mamoruti	Lesotho	Political Focal Point
Mr. Jose Camargo	Bolivia	Political Focal Point
Mr. M Nagaraju	India	Political Focal Point
Mr. Aminul Bhuiyan	Bangladesh	Political Focal Point
H.E. Carlos A. Lopez	Paraguay	Political Focal Point
H.E. Kwadwo Adjei-Darko	Ghana	Political Focal Point
H.E. Harison Edmond Randriarimanana	Madagascar	Political Focal Point

H.E. Kanyenkiko Anatole	Burundi	Political Focal Point
His Excellency Jose Endundo Bononge	Congo DR	Political Focal Point
His Excellency Kosim Kosimov	Tajikistan	Political Focal Point
His Excellency Tomas Vaquero	Honduras	Political Focal Point
Mr. Kalfau Kaloris	Vanuatu	Political Focal Point
H.E. Ronald Thompson	Bahamas	Political Focal Point
Mr. Michael Mitchell	Cook Islands	Political Focal Point
Mr. Ridwan Hassan	Indonesia	Political Focal Point
Her Excellency Carmen Maria Gallardo	El Salvador	Political Focal Point
Ms. Elisa Anderson	Australia	Political Focal Point/Donor Participants (Replenishment)/Donor Participants (SCCF)
Mr. Roberto Araquistain	Nicaragua	Political Focal Point/Operational Focal Point

VII

Announcements

Meet Our New Staff

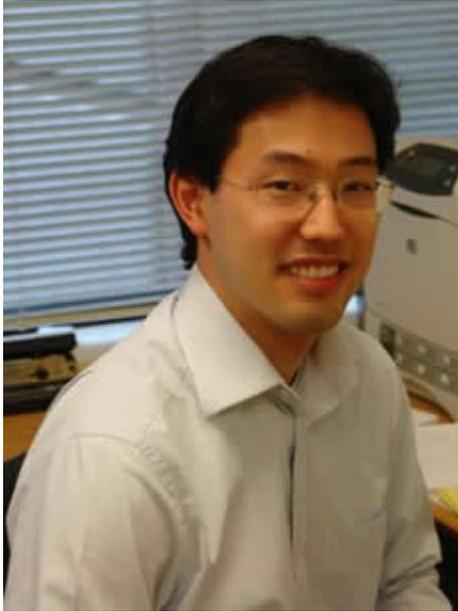
Meet Christian Hofer



Christian Hofer, a Swiss national, will join the GEF's External Affairs team in April as Senior Communications Officer. Over the last three years, Christian has been working in corporate communications and development communications for the World Bank's External Affairs Vice Presidency. In the Bank's DevComm division, he focused on outreach to countries in the Middle East and Francophone Africa, administering strategic communications tools in World Bank projects to contribute to increased effectiveness and transparency.

Before coming to Washington, Christian was in charge of the communications unit in the Economic Development Cooperation in the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) in Bern. Christian holds a Masters in Advanced Studies in International Development from the Swiss Federal School of Technology in Zurich and a BA in Political Science and Sociology from the University of Bern, Switzerland.

Meet Lucas Yuto N. Suzuki



Lucas Suzuki joined the External Affairs group in February as a Junior Professional Associate (JPA). He was born and raised in Curitiba, Brazil.

Lucas has a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Sao Paulo. Before joining the GEF, he was working in the financial department of Whirlpool Latin American HQ in Sao Paulo. He has also worked in the Innovation and Six Sigma department and is trained in the six sigma methodology.

Meet Dimitrios Zevgolis



Dimitrios Zevgolis joined the GEF's Climate and Chemicals team on March 24 as a Climate Change Specialist. He was born and raised in Athens, Greece and graduated with a degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering from the National Technical University of Athens. He holds an MBA in Engineering-Economic Systems and is a Ph.D. candidate and Research Associate at the National Technical University of Athens.

Before joining the GEF, Dimitrios was working in the EU Programmes Management Unit of the Greek Ministry of Development where he was responsible for the planning, management, evaluation and monitoring of energy-sector programs and projects that were financed by the European Regional Development Fund.