



GEF Small Grants Programme celebrates its first-year anniversary in Romania

On 11 November 2005, at Complex Parc Herastrau in Bucharest, the UNDP/GEF Small Grants Programme (GEF/SGP) celebrated its first-year anniversary in Romania: "The GEF Small Grants Programme – Resources for Environment and Communities".

The programme shared its achievements to date with a broad-based meeting of stakeholders: government, financing institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), members of the GEF/SGP National Steering Committee, and the mass media.

Opening the event, Ms. Soknan Han Jung, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative, said:

"I would like to encourage all of you to join forces together to help local communities in building sustainable livelihoods through the sensible use of natural resources. Today, our work is to focus on partnership-building, networking, sharing knowledge and experience, for the benefit of environment and our communities."

In her key note address, Ms. Sulfina Barbu, Minister of Environment and Water Management, expressed her appreciation for the implementation of the GEF/SGP in Romania. "I believe that this programme actually contributes to environmental protection at a global scale, given the well-known dictum 'Think globally, act locally'. Through the activities it undertakes, UNDP successfully applies this saying in practice, in an effective manner", the Minister said.



Roxana Suci, Head of Energy & Environment a.i.; Soknan Han Jung, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative; Sulfina Barbu, Minister of Environment and Water Management; Mihaela Dupleac, GEF/SGP National Coordinator.



NGOs, CBOs, government representatives, donors, NSC members following the discussions

The event demonstrated that local initiatives and partnerships among NGOs/CBOs, local authorities, private sector, and educational institutions can efficiently function to mobilize resources and to implement projects that contribute to the sustainable development of the communities. Each of the 13 projects introduced themselves by presentations and product display in a special exhibition, so that participants could enjoy a vivid picture of the GEF/SGP in Romania. The focus of projects ranges from biodiversity conservation, climate change reduction, international waters to POPs reduction. They involve communities in each project stage, from planning and writing the project proposal, to project implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This provides for local ownership of the projects, promoting their sustainability.

The event also raised donor interest in co-financing. In order to explore possible ways for cooperation and to facilitate NGO/CBO access to funding sources, a "donor floor" was organized. Donors - UNDP, GEF/SGP, Environmental Fund, Foundation for Civil Society Development, Heifer Romania Foundation, Mihai Eminescu Trust, REC Romania - presented their funding priorities. A "Q&A" section enabled an open dialogue with donors. A network of NGO/CBO grantees was established and the principles of the programme's revised impact-oriented strategy were debated with the participants.

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