

Dear GEF International Waters colleagues,

Greetings and thank you for joining us for the Fourth GEF International Waters Conference (IWC4)! We trust your time with us in Cape Town will be personally and professionally rewarding. We have designed this conference to offer you a wealth of opportunities to exchange experiences and lessons with GEF IW colleagues and partners from around the world. The GEF Secretariat and GEF IW:LEARN are grateful for lively feedback from prior GEF IW conferences in Hungary and China - and particularly the Brazil conference in 2005 - indicating your need to move beyond the traditional conference format of plenary sessions and extended presentations and instead, towards a more intimate, working-group based approach, with more opportunities for active face-to-face learning. This document is the first in a series of orientation materials we will be sending over the next six weeks to acquaint you with the different sessions at this “all new” GEF IW conference.

Guided by the World Bank Institute (WBI), which specializes in new learning techniques, you will be engaged as both a contributors and a recipients of information in this active learning process. Interactive discussion sessions will enable you to get to know, learn from, and discuss in depth with fellow participants, your issues and challenges. During breaks in the Innovation Marketplace, you may showcase your project's innovative and replicable achievements and approaches– and find out what others are doing in your region or in similar ecosystems. In an interview with GEF Secretariat officials, we will pass the microphone and answer your questions about new GEF policies and procedures. Your concerns and recommendations will be discussed with the entire GEF IW portfolio, and passed to the GEF and IW:LEARN to better serve your project and stakeholders. The final conference session will offer you a chance to attend participant-led workshops – or organize your own – to follow up on an area of particular interest with colleagues before departing the conference.

Further information on the IWC4 is posted to the conference website (<http://www.iwlearn.net/iwc4>), where the agenda and all outputs from the conference will also be posted. To clarify some potentially unfamiliar terms in the agenda, we have provided this document to define the various types of sessions and the overall flow of the conference.

With best wishes for a valuable, productive and enjoyable learning experience.

*The 4<sup>th</sup> GEF International Waters Conference Program Committee:*

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