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IFI Advisory Group – Working Group Meeting on Environment Chairman's Conclusions

The Environment Working Group of the IFI Advisory Group (IFI-AG) met for the first time on October 26, 2007. As with the other Working Group meetings, there was a very productive atmosphere and the meeting provided a very useful opportunity for exchange of information on operational programs of the different IFIs while also serving as a forum for strategic discussion.

The following conclusions were reached:

- Participants took note of the various regional mechanisms for prioritization of environmental investments in South East Europe (eg, DABLAS, the Priority Environmental Investment Programme, ICPDR).
- Participants stressed the need for good coordination between these mechanisms and will take into close consideration their findings¹
- Participants agreed that the group should focus as a priority on: i) continuing dialogue on the issue of climate change; and ii) continuing to focus at strategic level on financing for waste
- Moving forward, the group also took note of the conclusions of the KfW sponsored Conference on "Closing the gap for EU accession", which was held in Frankfurt on October 17-18, 2007. These conclusions will be taken into consideration for determining further work of the group.
- While it was agreed that the group cannot possibly address all of the issues on a country by country basis, it was recognized that there is a need for better coordination of IFI activities at country level. The European Commission will write a letter to Ministries of Environment to encourage them to organize such a meeting once a year
- Participants also underlined the need for organizing, at national level, a dialogue between competent authorities on environmental matters (eg, Ministries of Finance and of the Environment). It was proposed that the European Commission take the lead in organizing such a meeting in order to highlight the need for each country to have a clear strategy for prioritizing the use of public funds, including externally financed investments in the environmental sector. Such priorities need to be properly budgeted within National Public Investment Programs (PIPs).
- Participants highlighted the need to ensure the integration of environmental concerns into the IFI AG Working Groups on transport and energy

¹ IFIAG members were invited to attend the PEIP consultation meeting on November 26, 2007