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## **GEF Network Statement**

**9 November 2011**

### **Agenda 13 of the GEF Work Programme**

GEF/C.41/08/Rev.1

The GEF NGO Network welcomes the largest Work programme of the GEF in this GEF 5 period which signals significant progress in GEF implementation and fund disbursement

We support the proposed approval of the support to the small grants programme in some countries from the National STAR allocations. This is critical as these countries do not have access to core SGP resources.

We would like to highlight to the meeting the contribution of CSOs to co-financing of the Work programme as highlighted in table 5 on page 12 which states that CSOs are providing 134 million and Foundations 68 million which together is more than the contributions from bilateral agencies. In this regard i am very happy to highlight on behalf of WWF a decision to increase by 300% the level of co-financing of the proposed Project on “Sustainable management of Tuna fisheries and biodiversity conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ). The WWF global network has decided to increase co-financing to at least \$62 million co-financing for this project, including over \$30 million in cash contributions. This co-financing is well in excess of the \$15 million projected in current documentation before the Council and will strengthen the project’s transformational impact on the linkages between “governance” and “markets” reforms.

With regard to the range of projects being submitted to the work programme we are concerned that a number of projects appear to have been developed without adequate prior consultation with Civil society and other important stakeholders. We intend to submit a more complete written submission on the projects in the work programme but would like to highlight the following specific projects:

In the eastern Europe and Central Asia region, less than 60% of projects make any reference to CSO involvement of these 90% refer only to international NGOs rather than national or local organisations

In SE Asia the \$145 million programme for the Greater Mekong subregion Forests and Biodiversity Programme is of great relevance for Civil society especially Indigenous peoples. In the document – there is reference to international NGOs but no reference to the well established CSOs from within the region such the Indigenous Knowledge Program based in northern Thailand and which covers all the region. We believe that with the envisaged programme activities in many indigenous territories – it will be important that such communities are engaged at the very early stage of project development.

The \$797 million Program for scaling up investments for sustainable development of the large marine ecosystems in East Asia – contains generic information on CSO engagement but no details on the envisaged process for this to be done.

In NE Asia reference is made to CSOs in only 4 of 6 projects for approval. Of the four projects two projects specify international NGOs for involvement while the others make generic points about involvement of CSOs. One project indicates that specified NGOs will be “invited to participate” in the project but communication between the GEF NGO Network and the organisation indicated that the NGO had yet to be contacted.

In South America the specific projects make a generic reference to CSO engagement but it is clear that there has been no prior consultation with CSOs in the preparation of the PIF.

Last year we were very happy that it was decided to include a specific section in the PIF to document the specific involvement of key stakeholders including indigenous and local communities. However from our review of PIFs and programme documents in this work programme we believe that the current level of details included in the PIFs are inadequate to give a clear indication of the scope and nature of civil society involvement. We note that for a number of projects in regions with significant numbers of indigenous peoples we do not see any specific language on the process for engagement of such communities in the project or programme development.

We believe that there may be a need for further guidance to project proponents on how best to complete the relevant sections of PIFs. In addition we recall that the Council agreed in November 2010 to require that Stakeholder Engagement Plans be prepared as a component of each Project Document. Given the poor level of specificity in the PIFs we believe that clear guidance may be needed to ensure that there is adequate participation in the preparation of these plans.

For this reason we once again call for the updating of the GEF Public Involvement policy and the preparation of Specific Guidelines to guide agencies on effective civil society participation in the project preparation process.

As stated earlier we will submit some written comments on some specific projects.