



GEF NGO Network

Statement at the Opening of the GEF Council, 13 November 2012

On behalf of the 500 member organisations of the GEF NGO Network from more than 120 countries, I would like to make a few remarks at the start of the 43rd GEF Council session. This statement draws on the feedback from members on the council agenda as well as the deliberations we have had in Washington over the past three days including the Joint GEF-Council CSO consultation organised yesterday.

Firstly we would like to welcome Dr Naoko Ishii as the new Chairperson and CEO of the GEF. We welcome the emphasis that she placed during the CSO dialogue yesterday on enhancing the partnerships between GEF and Civil society and reviewing and adjusting the GEF policies and procedures to enhance the working relationship.

We also welcome the proposed Vision 2020 and pledge our support to the further development of this vision to provide a medium term strategy for GEF.

We note the funding needs assessment prepared recently under the Convention on Biological Diversity as a guidance to GEF and the GEF6 replenishment process. We believe that there needs to be initiated, prior to the start of the replenishment, a strategic review to take a more integrated approach to resource mobilisation and allocation than in the past- given the significant potential synergies. We also believe that GEF should allocate more resources for sub-regional cooperation and broad civil society engagement to stimulate collective action for transformational change.

We are concerned to see on the council agenda a paper to review the consequences of a projected shortfall of funds of \$590 million for GEF 5 and urge that all possible measures are taken to secure these resources in line with pledges. However if adjustment is made to the allocation we hope that those countries that receive the largest star allocations will be flexible to maintain the level of resources for the more vulnerable SIDS and LDCs as well as for stakeholder engagement and capacity building.

Lastly I wish to highlight the formal Report of the GEF NGO Network for the period 2011/2012 which is an official information paper to the Council meeting. We note the progress in the past year of establishing the NGO Voluntary Fund as mandated by the Council in 2008 and call on council members to allocate resources to the fund to support the work of the Network and Civil society. We also note the work to establish guidelines and mechanisms to enhance the engagement of indigenous peoples in GEF and hope that resources will be allocated to support its promotion and implementation. We have however highlighted in our report the urgent need to review and update the GEF Public involvement policy which is virtually unchanged since 1996 and urge the GEF to work with the Network to develop clear guidelines for its implementation and monitoring.