



GEF NGO Network Statement

on GEF Vision 2020 at the 43rd 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 time of this first substantive agenda item of the 43rd GEF Council session.

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 morning on enhancing the partnerships between GEF and Civil society and her commitment to review and adjusting the GEF policies and procedures to facilitate improved results.

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. It is essential that CSOs are an integral part of further development of the Vision.

It is very timely that GEF, as the apex environmental finance organization, adjusts itself to the rapidly changing world which is facing an environmental emergency situation. We need to change our mind-set. We need to change our outlook from economic growth oriented mentality towards green growth approach. We need to address environmental changes, establish Sustainable Development Goals and adopt green economy as a tool for sustainable development. Addressing the environment in an integrated way will have to become our top priority in political and economic decision making.

Madam CEO, as you expressed in your vision statement, GEF, as a champion of the environment, has the advantage and the initiative to turn the tide. However in this tough war, GEF needs local populations to engage with it and work with it to achieve envisaged transformational change. The real challenge lies at national level, where governments have to adopt green growth doctrine. They need to ensure effective participation of stakeholders and local populations.

Co-Chairs and council members, in order to initiate a decisive campaign to promote transformational environmental change - you will always find CSOs on your side to support GEF initiatives at international, regional, national and more importantly local basis. The local people have the traditional wisdom and knowledge to adapt to environmental changes and reverse their impacts. Time has come for GEF to establish meaningful and real partnership with local affected populations with the help of CSOs. There are tremendous opportunities to address land degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change in an integrated manner, through restoration of degraded forests, wetlands, rangelands and through climate smart agriculture, and attaining synergistic gains. Partnership with local populations, civil society and other stakeholders will also bring incremental contributions and valuable additions.

Finally we are circulating a statement highlighting some of the other key issues to be discussed in this council - building on discussions at the CSO consultations that have taken here for the past three days here in Washington, including the need to review and update GEF Policies and procedures for Public participation to help facilitate a paradigm change in partnership between GEF and civil society.