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**GEF-NGO Network Statement during 44th GEF Council Meeting
on the Organisation of the Fifth Assembly of the Global Environment Facility
(GEF)
19 June 2013**

The GEF NGO Network welcomes the proposal for the organization of the GEF Assembly in Mexico. The GEF NGO Network is positively anticipating a promising GEF Assembly in 2014. We envisage this as an important milestone to orienting the GEF 6 programming and furthering the GEF 2020 Strategy. The Assembly should be used as a key time to showcase the results of the CSO activity at grassroots level as well as the role of CSOs in enabling a multi-stakeholder and multi-partner approach to safeguarding the global environment and initiating transformational change.

Prior to the 4th GEF Assembly in GEF 2010, the GEF NGO Network worked with the GEF Secretariat to organize a one day CSO Forum that served as a platform to showcase projects and action that CSOs have been doing at national, regional and global level

It also resulted in a comprehensive civil society statement that was presented to the GEF Assembly the following day. The Statement included a number of the key demands Including:

- The development of a policy for the engagement of Indigenous Peoples in GEF;
- Enhancement of the Small Grants Programme
- Updating of the GEF Public involvement Policy
- Operationalisation of the GEF voluntary fund to support consultation and empowerment of CSOs
- Setting specific targets for involvement of CSOs in Medium and full sized projects

While significant progress has been made on these issues – there is a need for further review and reassessment of the current priorities at the next Assembly.

We urge the 44th Council, the Secretariat and Mexico as the host country to support the allocation of:

- a) Adequate resources to ensure sufficient presence of CSO representatives at the Assembly
- b) Support for a Civil Society Forum to be organized by the GEF NGO Network in partnership with the GEF Secretariat - so as to deepen and promote north-south, south-south networking, knowledge sharing and learning.
- c) Other measures to showcase the multistakeholder nature of the GEF and its partnership with civil society.