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WWF Network Support for an effective Global Environment Facility

At the final meeting of the Global Environment Facility's¹ 5th replenishment, to be held in Rome in March 2010, WWF calls on the GEF Council to endorse a US\$10 billion budget for GEF funds² and the reform package proposed by the GEF secretariat to ensure an effective response to global environmental challenges.

Adequate funding for immediate actions:

The GEF priorities for the next four years³ presented for approval is the result of twelve months of work involving key experts and organizations partnering with the GEF. The document clearly outlines realistic objectives and actions, in line with major convention guidelines, to be undertaken over the next four years in order to address the most urgent global environmental problems.

A US\$10 billion replenishment is needed for the GEF to meet existing and emerging environmental concerns both through equitable country support and supporting regional and global approaches. This budget allows for an average of US\$12 million per year for developing countries to fulfill their obligations under the environmental conventions, and corresponds to less than 1% of the annual ODA budgeted per donor country.

In Copenhagen developed countries committed US\$30 billion in additional funds between 2010-2013 as “fast-track” finance to support immediate action on climate adaptation and mitigation through international institutions accountable to the UNFCCC. As part of this commitment, WWF calls on the donors to pledge US\$1 billion for the GEF Trust Fund Climate Change focal area in addition to the GEF doubling replenishment, US\$1 billion for the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) and US\$2 billion Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) for adaptation. These GEF funds are currently fully operational for managing grants accessible to all developing countries to address both mitigation and adaptation. Currently 48 National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAS) have been prepared but the vast majority remains unfunded, leaving a **massive shortfall** that requires immediate funding.

¹ GEF is the designated financial mechanism for implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Stockholm Conventions on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). In addition, the GEF has financial responsibilities for International Water (fresh and marine trans-boundaries water basin and fish stocks preservation), and Sustainable Forest Management and Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)

² GEF trust fund and the LDCF/SCCF funds.

³ GEF5 programming document (GEF/R.5/25)

It is critical that short term financing is immediately provided to enable the world's poorest and most vulnerable countries and communities to implement proactive adaptation measures to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The proposed US budget for fiscal year 2011 includes a 112% increase in GEF support when compared with GEF4 levels. This is a clear endorsement of the GEF, its current mandate, and role and function as the financial mechanism of several of the environmental conventions. While the US government is the largest contributor to the GEF, the international community expects other donors to apply the burden sharing principle and increase their contributions accordingly.

Increase efficiency through a realistic reform:

The new GEF model proposed by the Secretariat compiles major inputs from partners organizations, including NGOs, provided over the last 12 months. These proposed changes would provide the GEF with the means to address the new social, economic and environmental challenges that have arisen since the GEF was originally created and its mandate set some two decades ago.

WWF calls on the participants to agree with the key points of the revised GEF5 Policy:

- a) Increase country ownership by integrating GEF program support into existing developing national programming and planning process to optimize Global Environment Benefits and avoid support to isolated projects. This is a major incentive to ensure that large ecosystems are taken into account in their entirety in the context of national sustainable development.
- b) Ensure that national authorities, in consultation with stakeholders including representatives of civil society organizations, determine country specific priorities for GEF program support. Such a transparent and participatory approach will ensure necessary expertise is mobilized and agreements are reached among key stakeholders on diagnosis and prioritization of relevant environmental concerns.
- c) Strengthen the GEF's overall efficiency and increase national authorities' choices of partners able to access GEF resources. The potential list will be extended to entities qualified to act as Implementing Agencies provided they fulfill GEF fiduciary and operational standards. This will enable countries to develop new initiatives and build new partnerships for leveraging major changes on environmental issues.
- d) A per country financial resource allocation for the development of GEF program support. This will improve countries' ability to have guaranteed access to GEF resources and allow countries to better plan programs and leverage necessary co-financing.
- e) Streamline the project cycle and refine the programmatic approach to ensure efficient responses to complex environmental issues. This will enable countries to both define national, regional and transnational approaches to address major threats affecting large land and marine ecosystems. In particular, the programmatic approach will help countries bring together both policies and practices for large regional forest basins, prepare countries for the REDD+ framework as agreed during the UNFCCC CoP15, and respond to the Copenhagen Declaration on mitigation and adaptation.

The WWF network calls on GEF Council participants party to the final negotiations of the GEF5 replenishment to adopt these changes proposed by the GEF secretariat and a replenishment totaling US\$10 billion. Equally, the GEF Council should ensure that changes are effectively put in place and are operational early in GEF5 programming, including the involvement of additional agencies as referred to in paragraph 28 of the GEF Instrument.