

Washington DC, October 5 2012

A letter from Dr. Naoko Ishii, GEF CEO and Chairperson to the GEF NGO Network.

Dear civil society colleagues and members of the GEF NGO Network,

I'm delighted to address you as the new CEO of the Global Environment Facility. I have been in office for two months and already can tell you that I see many opportunities for civil society organizations to enhance their contributions to the global environment and play an important role in the future of the GEF.

I have a great sense of energy and enthusiasm about our mission to support countries in achieving their sustainable development goals through innovative, scalable and well-managed environmental programs.

Many of you in your communities have already started experiencing the pressures that our planet is undergoing, such as the degradation of ecosystems, sea level rise, water scarcity and others. The answer to these pressures requires bold measures and we all, including civil society, need to play our part in finding solutions to the world's environmental problems. We're embarking on a new era marked by a new vision for the GEF, a vision which encompasses a transformational change, focused on achieving results that recognize that development and the environment are codependent. Natural resource management needs to be placed at the core of the development decision making. Healthy ecosystems are essential to secure human health, food, energy and water, and ultimately sustainable development. And civil society plays a pivotal role in ensuring that governments move forward the sustainable development agenda in their countries. As we saw in Rio+20, it is civil society players (in the broader sense) who are demanding world leaders to make commitments to significantly reduce the impacts on our planet and to make those commitments come true. It is civil society who will implement the actions on the ground.

As part of the new vision, I see the GEF playing the following key roles:

- i) The GEF should be an innovator and proponent of new ideas and new ways of doing business: in this sense, many community projects are incubators of new ideas. This can be leveraged through the GEF to national and global scales. In Mongolia, for example, where livestock is one of the major GHG emission sources, GEF SGP supported the development of an innovative methodology for biogas production in a cold climate, which was the first such experience in the country. This biogas production facility is now owned and run by the herders themselves.
- ii) The GEF should be a champion of global commons: as rural and indigenous communities depend on the common goods, they have a major role to play in safeguarding them;
- iii) I want the GEF to be a partner of choice: I have said that I aim to make the GEF a coalition of partners greater than the sum of its parts. In this context, the GEF will continue to partner with civil society to achieve its mission.
- iv) Lastly the GEF should be a financial catalyst: leveraging resources in order to bring transformational change to the global environment, the public and private sectors and civil

society must identify new ways of working together. The GEF can be a catalyst by buying out the risk that enterprises face when operating in new and innovative markets.

I will be working with my team on specific suggestions towards a leaner, more effective and efficient GEF that is closer to the needs of recipient countries.

Therefore, I invite you to provide your fresh ideas on how to enrich the key strategic areas that I consider essential for the success of the GEF in the coming years.

Sincerely,

Naoko Ishii
CEO and Chairperson
Global Environment Facility