



Global Environment Facility

Summary of Document GEF/C.34/9

Enhancing Civil Society Engagement and Partnership with the GEF

Recommended Council Decision

The Council, having considered document GEF/C.34/9, *Enhancing Civil Society Engagement and Partnership with the GEF*, welcomes the steps taken by the GEF Secretariat and the GEF NGO Network to strengthen the GEF's partnership and engagement with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

The Council welcomes the Strategic Operational Plan for 2008-2010 of the GEF NGO Network as presented in Annex I of document GEF/C.34/9 and encourages the GEF Secretariat, GEF agencies and GEF focal points to support its implementation.

The Council approves recreating the Voluntary NGO Trust Fund and adjusting the support provided for the participation of eligible Network representatives at Council meetings from the 50,000 US dollars set in 1995 to 70,445 US dollars, to account for cost increase of services, travel and inflation.

The Council approves the replacement of the NGO accreditation to the GEF with membership in the Network.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Network of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), referred to as the Network, was established in May 1995, following the GEF Council's decisions to strengthen relationships and interactions with NGOs by establishing a formal role for them with the GEF Secretariat, the Council, the Assembly and GEF agencies. The Network is an association of GEF-accredited organizations working in the fields of environment and sustainable development aligned with the GEF mandate. The Network membership currently comprises of the 660 accredited organizations.

2. In early 2005 the Secretariat financed an independent review of the Network (see document GEF/C.27/Inf.5). The review concluded that the Network was not operating effectively and lacked a long-term vision for effective engagement and service delivery. The review identified insufficient resources and a general lack of capacity as the largest obstacles impeding the Network from achieving its goals. The review stressed that the GEF Secretariat and the Network should collaborate to address these issues. The review recommended actions in three areas:

- (a) Strengthening the Network's management, refocusing the accreditation process, and strengthening outreach to NGOs;
- (b) Establishing an active partnership between the Network and the GEF Secretariat and the Council; and
- (c) Providing support, financial and otherwise, to build the Network's capacity.

3. In response to the review, the Network and the Secretariat have worked together from 2005 to 2008 and have addressed the issues raised in the review. As a result, the Network has developed a clear governance structure, rules and procedures and a Strategic Operational Plan that covers the period 2008-2010 (Annex I).

4. The Council is invited to note the progress made by the Network in strengthening its internal operations and activities over the past three years. The following proposals for strengthening relations between the GEF and CSOs are made for the consideration of the Council:

- (a) Support implementation of the Network's Strategic Operational Plan;
- (b) Recreate the Voluntary NGO Trust Fund to act as a funding mechanism to support the Network;
- (c) Replace accreditation to the GEF with membership in the Network;
- (d) Enhance support for consultations and input of CSOs to the GEF Council meetings;
- (e) Support targeted regional CSO Consultations;
- (f) Strengthen support for the NGO Coordinator at the GEF Secretariat;
- (g) Prepare strategic assessments to support the engagement of CSOs in the development and implementation of the GEF 5.