

**Statement from Dr. Wijarn Simachaya**  
**Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Natural Resources and**  
**Environment, Thailand**  
**On the Occasion of the Sixth 6<sup>th</sup> Global Environment Facility (GEF)**  
**Assembly**  
**Furama Resort Da Nang, Vietnam**  
**27-28 June 2018**

**Distinguished Chair; Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson  
of the Global Environment Facility; Excellencies;  
Distinguished delegates; Ladies and Gentlemen.....**

On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Government of the socialist republic of Vietnam for hosting this important gathering of ministers and high-level officials from GEF member states in Da Nang, the beautiful coastal city.

The GEF Assembly is held every four years to review the policies and operation of the GEF. I am very pleased that this important event takes place held in ASEAN region for the first time. I am looking forward to participating in the interactive high-level roundtables, where important global environmental issues will be discussed. The fourteen topics of the round table discussion are very essential. And marine plastics, sustainable cities, wildlife, circular and blue economy, and innovation in clean energy are of Thailand's particular interest.

On World Environment Day this year, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment in collaboration with other ministries made a pledge to reduce the use of plastic bags and foam containers to set an example for others to follow. On the same occasion, the Federation of Thai Industries and other relevant sectors have launched the “Public Private Partnership for Sustainable Plastic, and Waste Management” and including “Waste to energy” in an effort to tackle problems of waste and marine plastics for the next five years.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The rapid economic growth and increasing unsustainable use of resources have created a negative impact on the planet’s natural resources and environment. To address these challenges, the Government has recently adopted “Thailand 4.0” as an economic model to escape the middle income trap by transforming Thailand into a value based economy using new knowledge and technology as well as innovation and creativity. The 20-Year National Strategy provides a long-term guidelines and benchmarks in achieving sustainable development in the country. It has also been implemented through reforming 11 sectors which support Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs. “Natural Resources and Environment” matter is definitely one of the vital cross-cutting issue regarding our reform.

The natural resources are our primary capital, vital for our healthy environment, economy and human well-being. Thai Government has supported conservation and restoration of natural resources to achieve economic security within and beyond national boundaries. We are implementing various environmental management plans and strategies including the Master Plan on Climate Change for 2015-2050, the Waste Management Roadmap and the Thailand's Sustainable Consumption and Production Roadmap for 2017-2036.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Thailand welcomes the progress made in the GEF-7 replenishment negotiations which support country priorities aiming at tackling the drivers of environmental degradation. In implementing GEF-6 projects, we significantly promoted multi-focal areas implementation, including integration of Climate Change Mitigation and Chemicals and Waste. As for GEF-7, Thailand will continue supporting the synergies among the environmental conventions and integration of GEF Focal Areas. Thailand also appreciates the GEF-7 Programming Directions, particularly "Impact Programs", consisting of food system, land use and restoration, sustainable cities as well as sustainable forest management; because, these programmes could be implemented through a broader stakeholder participation and more holistic approach in line with countries' national development priorities.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In moving forward for GEF-7 implementation, Thailand stands ready to start developing the National Portfolio Formulation Document (NPF) with all relevant stakeholders in the country, in order to come up with the list of projects based on the country's needs and priorities.

Strengthening communication and cooperation among GEF, implementing agencies and beneficiary countries are a key mechanism to achieve the mandate of the GEF. In this context, we would like to encourage GEF Secretariat, Agencies, governments and stakeholders to collaborate closely in assisting project implementation in a more cost-effective and beneficial manners to achieve GEF-7 programming directions.

Finally, the principle of "Thinking globally, acting locally" underlines the importance of building knowledge and capacity of local people for greater impacts and successful implementation of GEF projects. Thailand will also continue to support the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) which has brought about several good environmental practices in local communities around the country.

Thank you.