



Statement of the Global Environment Facility

Topic: Means of Implementation

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The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification emphasize the importance of the conservation, and sustainable use and management of forests for achieving their respective Convention objectives, as highlighted by Mr Djoghlaif, Mr. Gnacadja and Ms Sanz-Sanchez this morning. The frameworks of the UNFF and CPF have more recently emphasized the inter-linkages and multiple benefits of forests, as stated by Ms McAlpine and Mr Heino. This morning we would like to bring to your attention that, in line with these frameworks, and as an operating entity of the financial mechanisms for all three Conventions, the Global Environment Facility has supported more than 300 projects and programs that focus on various actions dealing with forest conservation and management in developing countries. Since its inception, the GEF has allocated approximately US\$1.5 billion to forest initiatives, supplemented by more than US\$4.5 billion in cofinancing. The GEF has continuously increased its financial flows for forest-related activities throughout its successive replenishment periods.

Complementing the earlier investments in forest conservation and sustainable use, and recognizing major gaps in financing of SMF, in 2007 the GEF council introduced a more strategic and focused approach to Sustainable Forest Management. This approach seeks to deliver multiple global environmental benefits, including the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and combating land degradation and desertification.

The SFM program already consists of a diverse portfolio of projects that focus on individual GEF focal areas or emphasize the multiple benefits provided by forest ecosystems. All types of forests are eligible for funding across all countries eligible for GEF funding. The portfolio supports a wide spectrum of SFM management tools such as protected area management, integrated watershed management, certification of timber and non-timber forest products and Payments for Ecosystem Services. As importantly, the GEF has successfully financed programs and projects in the LULUCF arena during this fourth funding period, often in partnership with agencies like the World Bank, ADB, IADB, FAO, UNEP, UNDP and others.

The GEF is currently undergoing a replenishment process which will lead to a new funding cycle starting in June 2010. One of the strategies under active development, to become operational in the interface between SFM and LULUCF, will support investments to control and prevent deforestation and forest degradation. The overarching goal for GEF-5 investment in SFM is to secure multiple global environmental benefits provided by all types of forests, and support the sustainable livelihoods of peoples dependent on the protection and use of forest resources.

The increasing awareness of forests and their potential for climate change mitigation provides a historic opportunity to counteract environmental degradation while directly promoting sustainable development. The GEF, a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests has already successfully experimented with financing projects and programs that seek to generate multiple benefits from forests at unprecedented scales. For its fifth replenishment period, we are planning to enhance our financial commitment to SFM in order to effectively respond to the increasing challenges to forest ecosystems. We call on our partners, and in particular the UNFF, to join us in this endeavour. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.