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PRESS RELEASE

Important steps taken to expand CDM in Africa, much remains to be done – Nairobi Framework partners

(Nusa Dua, 6 December 2007) – A good start has been made to extend the benefits of the clean development mechanism (CDM) to Africa, but a great deal more remains to be done, and much more is needed in terms of donor support, say representatives of the five agencies implementing the Nairobi Framework aimed at spreading the benefits of CDM.

“There are 850 clean development mechanism projects in 49 developing countries, but only 23 of those projects are in Africa. It’s time that the benefits of this important Kyoto Protocol mechanism were expanded in Africa,” said Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC and the UN’s top climate change official.

Under the CDM, projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to sustainable development can earn saleable certified emission reduction credits (CERs). Countries with a commitment under the Kyoto Protocol can use the CERs to meet a portion of their obligations under the Protocol.

A year after then Secretary-General Kofi Annan launched the Nairobi Framework, aimed at spreading the benefits of CDM to more countries, several more projects have been launched in Africa. Still, projects in Africa account for just 2.6 per cent of all CDM projects.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Bank, African Development Bank and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat have joined forces to implement the Nairobi Framework, and bring to life the expressed aspirations of Parties to scale up CDM in Africa. They have written a comprehensive project proposal for which they are seeking donor support.

“UNDP considers climate change to hit at the very heart of its development mission. Climate change threatens to seriously undermine efforts to eliminate poverty and reach the Millennium Development Goals, particularly in the least developed countries,” said Yannick Glemarec, Executive Coordinator of the UNDP for the Global Environment Facility.

The first concrete outcome under the Nairobi Framework is a joint UNDP–UNEP six-country CDM capacity development project in sub-Saharan Africa initiated in September 2007. The project – managed by a UNDP Regional Project Coordinator based in Addis Ababa – covers Ethiopia,



Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia, and was launched in October. The Governments of Spain, Sweden and Finland have contributed a total of USD 1.5 million to the project.

"In Africa, efforts to capture CDM benefits are accelerating, supported by a number of individual and joint UN efforts. Overcoming the complexity of the CDM and general investment barriers, however, cannot be done overnight, but our sustained efforts are producing results," said John Christensen, Head of UNEP RISOE Centre, based in Denmark.

Konrad von Ritter, Sector Manager for Sustainable Development at the World Bank Institute, pointed to real accomplishments in the past year.

"There has been a notable increase in capacity-development resulting in a pipeline of 30 CDM projects. Of these, 14 have already signed emissions reduction purchasing agreements with World Bank carbon funds. While this is positive we all know that more needs to be done, and therefore the critical importance of the Nairobi Framework to scale up capacity development," Mr. von Ritter said.

About the UNFCCC

With 191 Parties, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has near universal membership. It is the parent treaty of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which has to date 175 member Parties. Under the Protocol, 36 States, consisting of highly industrialized countries and countries undergoing transition to a market economy, have legally binding greenhouse gas (GHG) emission limitation and reduction commitments, while developing countries have non-binding obligations to limit emissions. The ultimate objective of both treaties is to stabilize GHG concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.

About the CDM

There are currently more than 850 registered CDM projects in 49 countries, and about another 2000 projects in the project registration pipeline. The CDM is expected to generate more than 2.6 billion certified emission reductions (tradable CERs) by the time the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol ends in 2012, each equivalent to one tonne of carbon dioxide.

Note to journalists:

For further information, please contact David Abbass, Public Information Officer, clean development mechanism at Tel: 081 338 934783 in Bali or after January 7 in Bonn at +49 228 815-1511, e-mail: dabbass@unfccc.int

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