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PRESS RELEASE

Kyoto Protocol Clean Development Mechanism reaches milestone at 3,000 projects

(Bonn, 5 May 2011) – The Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), the international tool that channels investment into clean energy and greenhouse gas reduction technology in the developing world, has registered its 3,000th project, a wind power project in Inner Mongolia, China.

The project is expected to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, the greenhouse gas which contributes most to human-generated climate change, by more than 101,000 tonnes a year.

"The Clean Development Mechanism is still evolving and will continue to do so. But from the original concept to now, it has been a success way beyond the initial expectations, not only in the number of projects but also in its ability to attract private sector investment into bettering livelihoods and environments of people in the developing world," said UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres.

Governments founded the CDM on the clear principle that every CDM project must deliver a real and transparent reduction of carbon emissions in a way that contributes to sustainable development.

At last December's UN Climate Change Conference in Cancun, Mexico, governments agreed that tools such as the CDM have a key role to play in climate action. They are now discussing possible further mechanisms that will help governments and business work together to redeploy the urgent resources that developing countries need to build their own sustainable futures.

"The World will not solve climate change without an ever-increasing commitment to international cooperation," said Ms. Figueres. "That means the financial sector and business must be given ways and means to help put money and technology where they are most needed into the developing world, as well as into the developed world."

"The CDM is improving all the time. Governments and the Board that manages the CDM are working to attract more projects into the poorest countries and to safeguard the mechanism's environmental integrity," said Ms. Figueres.

There are now CDM projects in 71 countries. In addition to the 3,000 so far registered, there are about another 2,600 projects in various stages of the vetting process. Growth remains steady. The number of projects beginning validation in the first three months of 2011 was 17 percent higher than in the same period in 2010.



Under the CDM, projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to sustainable development can earn saleable emission offset credits – so-called CERs. Each CER is equivalent to one tonne of carbon dioxide. Developed countries which have an emission reduction commitment under the Kyoto Protocol can use these CERs to meet a part of their obligations to reduce their national greenhouse gas emissions under the Protocol.

To date, 1,039 projects have earned a total of more than 600 million certified emission reduction credits.

The 3,000th project (ref. no. 3969) will involve installation of 41 wind-powered turbines capable of producing up to 49.5 MW of electricity. The electricity produced will be fed into the power grid and displace electricity that otherwise would have been generated through the burning of high-carbon fossil fuel.

About the UNFCCC

With 195 Parties, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has near universal membership and is the parent treaty of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol has been ratified by 193 of the UNFCCC Parties. Under the Protocol, 37 States, consisting of highly industrialized countries and countries undergoing the process of transition to a market economy, have legally binding emission limitation and reduction commitments. The ultimate objective of both treaties is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system.

About the Clean Development Mechanism

The CDM allows emission-reduction projects in developing countries to earn certified emission reduction (CER) credits, each equivalent to one tonne of CO₂. CERs can be traded and sold, and used by industrialized countries to meet a part of their targets under the Protocol. The CDM assists countries in achieving sustainable development and emission reductions, while giving industrialized countries some flexibility in how they meet their emission targets.

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