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Comments from WWF on "Information note - Strategic partnerships between Danish CSOs and MFA – Eligibility and application"

WWF Verdensnaturfonden appreciate the opportunity to give comments and input to the suggested criteria and framework for the new strategic partnership modality. We would also like to use this opportunity to express our satisfaction with the involvement of the CSOs in the process of designing the new modality.

In support and addition to the comments from Global Focus, which we fully support, we have the following comments and suggestions for adjustments to the Information note.

- 1) One of the four overall strategic points of orientation of the Danish Strategy for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Action is that *Denmark will invest in inclusive sustainable growth in developing countries with a focus on energy, water, agriculture, food and other areas where Denmark has special knowledge, resources and interests*. With engagements in priority transition and emerging economies only counting as a strategic match under lot LAB, where does the ministry see the role of Danish CSOs (other than labor organizations and industry associations) with this strategic point of orientation under the strategy? We recommend that the final guidelines and criteria for the new strategic partnership agreements will explicitly encourage and provide incentives for Danish CSOs to engage in promoting inclusive green economies also in poor developing countries.
- 2) Related to this point we would also like to emphasise the following comment from Global Fokus: We find it too narrow and a lack of appreciation of the role of CSOs, that activities in emerging economies are solely prioritized under the LAB lot. Though we agree the large majority of CIV lot engagements should be in the poor developing countries, it is important that Danish CSOs (and not only labor organisations and industry associations) can engage in this category of countries, to support the environmental and social integrity of private sector led development activities, as well as target the remaining (and significant) 'pockets' of poverty and substantial environment and climate related challenges in these countries.
- 3) We highly welcome a new CSO modality that emphasises partnerships and synergies between the different Danish development actors. Therefore we also find it strange that the new modality does not encourage Danish CSOs to collaborate and align their programmes to achieve more synergies. On the contrary, the modality does give positive assessment to organisations that seek synergies through coordination and collaboration, and it does not allow applicants for the CIV lot to submit joint applications. This encourages competition and discourages collaboration among different CSOs. We find this very unfortunate, as there are great synergies and new approaches to be developed through collaboration between CSOs with different strengths and experiences joining forces. A good example is



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the innovative work on environment, reproductive health and population growth being done in collaboration between Planned Parenthood and WWF in Nepal. We encourage the ministry to include assessment criteria that encourages this sort of innovative collaboration among different CSOs.

- 4) There is very little reference to and encouragement for harmonisation and aid effectiveness in the new CSO support modality. This has been an important aspect of WWF's work for years, along the lines of the 8 Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness. We have made great efforts to align to these principles with our partners in developing countries and the effects have been clear. Working with a strategic programme approach rather than a project approach, encouraging basket funding modalities, one joint programme progress report as well as one joint financial report have increased our partners' capacity in terms of planning, organization, strategic thinking and effectiveness. We have experienced these benefits together with the other Nordic WWF offices and WWF UK, creating examples to follow in our international WWF network. Unfortunately, we don't see much sign of incentives for this kind of CSO harmonization in the Strategic Partnership Information Note, which we regret. We feel that it would be a mistake and a set back if this aspects is not encourage in the new Partnership modality between MFA and Danish CSOs.
- 5) We would like to emphasise the following comment also included in teh response by Global Fokus: If the division between humanitarian action and development work should be bridged, it is essential not only to integrate long-term development in humanitarian actions but also to prevent and mitigate potential conflicts and climate related disasters that can lead to humanitarian crises and social instability by promoting long-term development, resilience and preparedness in vulnerable communities and regions.
 - a. In this regard, we propose to explicitly include more nexus activities, such as resilience and preparedness, under the CIV lot and to 'mirror' the proposed HUM activity of "ensuring coherence with development work" under the CIV lot (replacing 'development' with 'humanitarian').
 - b. Following this, the application format should include a section for descriptions and reflections on the applicants' approach to working across the nexus, presenting concrete examples/cases. The inclusion of a nexus assessment criteria would also be relevant.
- 6) Lastly we would like to comment on the very strict timeline for this application process. Formally there will be 1,5 month from being invited to submit a full application on 28 March to the deadline for submission on 15 May. This is too short to have the necessary consultation with partner organisations in the south on programme development.

På vegne af WWF Verdensnaturfonden,

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