

The United Nations Foundation is pleased to nominate the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for the “I-Star” Award for Energy Efficiency. Founded in 1991, the GEF is a unique partnership of 178 countries, international agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector that provides grants to developing countries and economies in transition for projects that address global environmental issues while supporting national sustainable development initiatives. The GEF is the financial mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and three other multilateral agreements and has provided almost \$8 billion for more than 2,000 environmental projects in 165 countries. These projects have leveraged more than \$30 billion in co-financing.

Energy efficiency has been a fundamental pillar of GEF’s operations. Over the past 18 years, the GEF has demonstrated its leadership by investing **\$1 billion in energy efficiency initiatives and projects in more than 90 developing countries and economies in transition** (the complete list of projects can be found at [www.thegef.org](http://www.thegef.org)). These investments have been augmented by an additional \$6 billion in co-financing. GEF support has been instrumental in putting energy efficiency on the agenda of all major developing countries and emerging economies, including China, India, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, Egypt, Turkey and Russia. **Through policy interventions and investments, GEF projects have improved the energy efficiency of recipient countries by up to 30%, resulting in an estimated global energy savings of 4.6 billion tons of oil equivalent over the lifetime of the projects.**

The GEF has been a pioneer in market transformation for energy efficient technologies and practices. Through the GEF, key developing countries have introduced energy efficiency standards for appliances, lighting, buildings, and industrial equipment. The standards and regulations put in place now will yield benefits for the next 10 to 30 years. During the 18 years of its existence, the GEF has promoted the demonstration, deployment, diffusion, and transfer of energy efficiency technologies in almost all economic sectors such as buildings, industry, transport, and waste management. It has become the largest public-sector energy efficiency technology transfer mechanism in the world.

The GEF has also been at the forefront of advancing innovative market-based mechanisms and financial instruments to promote energy efficiency, including energy service companies, energy performance contracting, partial-risk guarantees, as well as revolving and equity funds. For example, the GEF initiated the now booming ESCO industry in China, and provided funds to back loan guarantees to commercial banks to promote ESCOs’ work on energy performance contracting. Today, the ESCO industry is one of the principal means the government is using to promote energy conservation in China. **More than 140 energy efficiency measures in China have been implemented through the GEF program, which has resulted in 35 million tons of coal equivalent energy savings as well as a reduction of 86 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> over nine years** (World Energy Outlook, 2008).

The GEF’s work in energy efficiency and climate change has also benefited the 2 billion people in the developing world who do not have adequate energy services and rely on traditional biomass to meet their basic energy needs. The GEF has been a leader in financing and disseminating energy efficient cook stoves, energy efficient charcoal production technologies, and energy-saving compact fluorescent lamps, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The GEF has also helped many utilities in developing countries to reduce losses in transmission and distribution and to improve the efficiency of power generation through rehabilitation of existing facilities.

We believe these energy efficiency achievements are a success story of global significance, but because of the GEF’s collaborative, often “behind-the-scenes” role, its contributions are not widely known. The Alliance to Save Energy’s prestigious “I-Star” Award would help widely communicate the GEF’s important global contribution to energy efficiency.

Thank you for your consideration of this nomination.