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**FIRST JOINT DECLARATION BY EUROPEAN AND U.S.
ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ON THE
TRANSATLANTIC ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP**

Brussels/Washington, D.C. December 14, 1998

On behalf of our members, who are committed to strengthening sustainable development policies throughout the world, we welcome the recent opening of the United States-European Union partnership for dialogue with civil society as an important opportunity to ensure that future economic relations between the European Union and the United States are based on the principles of sustainability and environmental protection.

Regrettably, the current version of the Transatlantic Economic Partnership (TEP) Action Plan fails to fully integrate environmental concerns into the TEP trade policy agenda. As a result, the goal of organizing economic relations on the fundamental principles of sustainable development is not achievable under the Action Plan. We remain convinced that numerous structural and substantive issues must be addressed if the TEP is to receive broad-based public support in the EU and the U.S.

Therefore, we respectfully call on the governments of the United States and the European Union to *postpone implementation* of the Transatlantic Economic Partnership. Our governments must immediately begin to work with civil society to revise the implementation of the TEP Action Plan to ensure that this partnership will actively promote environmental protection and sustainable development.

Our request is not unprecedented. The EU and the U.S. have previously committed themselves to integrating economic development and environmental protection in agreements such as Agenda 21, the Rio Principles, the OECD Procedural Guidelines on Integrating Trade and Environment and the Conclusions of the EU Cardiff Summit on Integration. We urge the U.S. and the EU to transform these commitments into reality through a revised TEP Action Plan.

All economic goals and concepts associated with the TEP should be reviewed to integrate sustainable development concerns into the TEP's basic structure. In order to do so, the following priorities must become integral components of future transatlantic economic cooperation:

- Comprehensive environmental and social impact assessments of each activity within the TEP plan must be conducted *before their implementation* to ensure that environmental and sustainable development concerns are mainstreamed into the negotiating objectives. These assessments should explicitly incorporate potential indirect impacts of this agreement on developing country trading partners.
- Trade and investment negotiations and policy positions should promote economic development in the European Union and the United States in a manner which respects

environmental limits, preserves and enhances biodiversity, protects human, animal and plant life, provides social justice and equity, and maintains cultural diversity. At minimum, a thorough application of the polluter pays principle and the precautionary principle should be incorporated into all trade negotiation and cooperation sectors.

- Decisions related to the TEP should only be taken by democratic bodies which incorporate procedural guarantees of transparency, participation and accountability. Implementation of the TEP Action Plan must respect the right of all duly-elected national governments to maintain and further develop high national environmental protection standards and to determine appropriate levels of risk for their citizens.
- New commitments and concrete actions in the area of trade and investment by both the EU and the U.S. at the international level should promote similar sustainable development, democratic rights, and environmental protection elsewhere in the world, and in no case should impede the realization of these goals.

We must emphasize our collective concern that trade liberalization will not guarantee the ambitious goals of sustainable development. We call for democratic and transparent behavior by both the European Union and the United States in these bilateral and other multilateral negotiations to ensure that EU and U.S. interests are not imposed on other countries, especially developing countries, and that joint positions reached in the TEP are not used to do so.

The United States and the European Union have a critical opportunity to demonstrate to the world that they are changing the way they conduct international economic negotiations. We look forward to working with you to restructure the TEP Action Plan so that its objectives actively promote, rather than undermine, sustainable development and environmental protection.

Signed By:

European Union

Bond Beter Leefmilieu, Belgium
Climate Network Europe
Deutsche Naturschutz Ring
European Environmental Bureau
EU-Umweltbuero im Umweltdachverband
OEGNU (Austria)
Friends of the Earth Europe
Friends of the Earth Germany (BUND)
Greenpeace International
Les Amis de la Terre, France
World Wide Fund for Nature Europe
World Wide Fund for Nature International

United States

Center for International Environmental Law
Center of Concern
Community Nutrition Institute
Consumer's Choice Council
Defenders of Wildlife
Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund
Friends of the Earth U.S.
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
National Wildlife Federation
Public Citizen
Sierra Club