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PRESS RELEASE

WWF WELCOMES HOUSE PASSAGE OF LANDMARK ENERGY AND CLIMATE LEGISLATION

*In Historic Vote, Congress Takes Key First Step Toward Clean Energy Future;
“If we bankrupt nature, there will be no bailout,” says WWF CEO Carter Roberts*

WASHINGTON, DC, June 26, 2009 – In a bipartisan vote, the U.S. House of Representatives today passed landmark legislation that would constitute America’s biggest step to date in responding to the energy and climate crises.

World Wildlife Fund officials commended the House of Representatives for taking a first step towards a clean energy economy, creating jobs and exports, and protecting our nation’s quality of life and said the bill is a critical starting point, at a crucial time given the increasing urgency of the climate change problem.

“This bill is not everything we need, but it is a critical starting point, at a crucial time,” said WWF President and CEO Carter Roberts. “We are seeing the impacts of climate change right in our own backyards. And they are coming faster and hitting harder than anticipated. From heat waves in the South, to flooding rains in the Midwest, to drought in the West, every region of this country is feeling the dangerous and costly consequences of climate change. We have to get started, and this bill would represent an unprecedented leap forward.

“The choice before us is two-fold: rise to this challenge by slowing emissions and preparing for climate change impacts, or allow the disruption of our climate to escalate in dangerous and costly ways. There are no do-overs in this game. If we bankrupt nature, there will be no bailout.”

The American Clean Energy and Security Act, would place a national limit on greenhouse gas pollution that declines over time, while setting up a market-based framework to bring down emissions in an economically efficient manner. It would also launch an effort to begin preparing communities across the U.S. to cope with the impacts that are unavoidable given the changes we are already experiencing.

Dr. Richard H. Moss, vice president of WWF's climate change program, emphasized the crucial importance of passing a strong climate bill this year in order to demonstrate U.S. leadership on the issue prior to international negotiations that will take place this December in Copenhagen.

"Climate change is a global problem requiring a global solution," said Moss. "American families will not be protected from the impacts of climate change without reducing emissions around the world. If we want other countries to put more on the table in Copenhagen, we need to show that the U.S. is finally ready to act. Enacting strong climate legislation is the most effective thing America could do to negotiate the strongest commitments from other countries."

Moss noted that the bill includes provisions that are essential to reaching an agreement in Copenhagen. For example, the bill would make critical investments in stopping tropical deforestation, the source of roughly 20 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions; would promote technology cooperation between the U.S. and developing countries to help lower emissions world-wide; and would help the world's most vulnerable people and communities respond to existing and future impacts from climate change.

"I commend Speaker Pelosi, Chairmen Waxman and Markey, and all of the Members who worked tirelessly and doggedly to pass this important legislation," said Bill Eichbaum, WWF vice president for U.S. government relations. "Now our work turns to the Senate where, for the sake of protecting Americans from dangerous impacts of climate change and ensuring a strong global outcome in Copenhagen, we must further strengthen the bill."

Eichbaum noted that passage of the bill comes just days after the release of three major government reports that make clear that there is no time to waste and no reason not to act: a report issued last week by the White House noted that climate change impacts are already being felt in every region of the country and will increase in severity if action is not taken, while analyses released earlier this week by both the Congressional Budget Office and the Environmental Protection Agency concluded that the cost to the average American household of implementing the climate bill would be less than 50 cents day.

Neither the CBO nor EPA studies factored in cost savings that would result from the bill's mandated improvements in energy efficiency or the additional costs to consumers of unmitigated climate impacts. After adding in those two factors, American households would see significant net savings under the climate bill, said Eichbaum.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

For more information, visit: <http://www.worldwildlife.org/climate/waxmanmarkeyhousevote/>.

ABOUT WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

WWF is the world's leading conservation organization, working in 100 countries for nearly half a century. With the support of almost 5 million members worldwide, WWF is dedicated to delivering science-based solutions to preserve the diversity and abundance of life on Earth, halt the degradation of the environment and combat climate change. Visit www.worldwildlife.org to learn more.