

Media Contacts: Tracy Austin, (212) 605-2121
tracy.austin@mitsubishicorp.com

Joseph Reganato, (212) 605-2314
joseph.reganato@mitsubishicorp.com

MITSUBISHI CORPORATION FOUNDATION FOR THE AMERICAS DEDICATES \$1 MILLION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CAUSES

NEW YORK (December 8, 2009) – At its annual meeting on November 6, 2009, the Board of Directors of the Mitsubishi Corporation Foundation for the Americas (MCFA) approved \$1,000,000 in support of environmental causes, including 5 new and 7 continuing grants, and a first-time \$300,000 program-related-investment (PRI) to Root Capital, a nonprofit social investment fund that is pioneering finance for grassroots businesses in rural areas in developing countries. The PRI will both expand lending to sustainable small and growing businesses in Brazil, Colombia, Peru, and Ecuador and promote the preservation of environmentally vulnerable regions in Latin America.

The PRI is part of a growing trend among foundations to increase their impact through mission-related investing, and enables MCFA to increase its total funding at a time when many funders are cutting back due to the recent financial crisis. MCFA has also joined the More for Mission Campaign's Members Circle (www.moreformission.org).

New grants include: \$150,000, payable over five years to the Alaska Federation of Natives; \$60,000, payable over three years to the American Bird Conservancy; \$25,000 to Fundación Natura of Colombia; and general support grants of \$15,000 to the Environmental Grantmakers Association, and \$10,000 to International Funders for Indigenous Peoples.

The grant to the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) will support AFN's Alaska Marketplace Competition and establish the *Mitsubishi Corporation Sustainable Business Innovator Award*. Mr. Koichi Komatsu, Chairman of the Board of MCFA, states in an address to the 2009 Annual AFN Convention, "Our goal is to work with AFN and the awardees to identify

and support innovative business concepts that have the capacity to generate prosperity while also enhancing the social, ecological, and cultural integrity of rural communities throughout Alaska.” A video of Mr. Komatsu’s speech can be viewed at www.mcfamericas.org.

MCFA’s grant to American Bird Conservancy (ABC) is for a “Women in Conservation” project that is helping 36 women expand or develop micro-businesses, while also preventing illegal extraction or poaching of wood, animals, and other resources from nature reserves in Colombia. The project will be conducted jointly by ABC and its Colombia-based partner, ProAves. To date, MCFA has donated nearly \$300,000 to ABC, primarily for the purchase of land for bird and wildlife conservation purposes.

MCFA’s grant to Fundación Natura will help small and medium-sized cocoa producers in Colombia improve the sustainability of their cultivation and production practices. In 2007, MCFA made a \$27,000 grant to Fundación Natura to fund the participation of indigenous women from various Andean countries in a conference on climate change at the University of Bogotá.

The Environmental Grantmakers Association (EGA), based in New York City, is an association of nearly 200 foundations that strives to help member organizations become more effective environmental grantmakers through information sharing, collaboration and networking. MCFA’s \$15,000 grant is for general operating support. MCFA has been a member of the EGA since 2003.

International Funders for Indigenous Peoples (IFIP), based on a New York-state Native American reservation, is a funders’ affinity group that advocates for increased, dedicated funding for Indigenous peoples’ causes throughout the world. The \$10,000 grant is a challenge grant to be used to encourage other funders to support IFIP. MCFA has been a member and supporter of IFIP since 2005.

In addition to the new grants, the MCFA Board authorized the payment of annual installments coming due for multi-year grants totaling more than \$2 million, including multi-

year grants of \$1,000,000 to the Wildlife Conservation Society for conservation work in Argentina; \$400,000 to *O Boticário* Foundation for the Oasis Project, a watershed conservation project in Brazil involving payments for ecosystem services (PES); \$300,000 to the *Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda* for environmental education initiatives in the state of Querétaro, Mexico; \$130,000 to the Wild Salmon Center for Indigenous Peoples' participation in the North American Stronghold Partnership, a salmon conservation project; \$100,000 to Urban Habitat for the advancement of a green economic development plan for the city of Richmond, CA; and \$100,000 to the Rainforest Alliance to support responsible tourism in Peru and Ecuador and sustainable coffee production in Brazil.

###

The **Mitsubishi Corporation Foundation for the Americas**, based in New York City was established 1991 with funding from Mitsubishi Corporation of Japan, and its U.S.-based subsidiary, Mitsubishi International Corporation. Since its establishment, the Foundation has dedicated more than \$5.6 million to environmental causes throughout the Americas. For more information, www.mcfamericas.org. Contributions for Europe and Africa are made by the Mitsubishi Corporation Fund for Europe and Africa, which has given more than \$4 million to environmental conservation, education and research since 1992. For more information, please visit www.mcfea.org.