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The Montreal Protocol's Multilateral Fund and Sustainable Development

The 1987 Montreal Protocol is widely recognized as a global environmental accord that has produced tangible results in terms of reductions in ozone-depleting substances. In addition, and this has been largely unrecognised and so far undocumented, there have been other benefits best characterized within a sustainable development framework. Aiming to identify such sustainable 'side-effects', this article reviews 51 out of 930 projects implemented by UNIDO, one of the four implementing agencies of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol. Within this sample, the 44 investment projects have reduced ozone depleting potential and global warming potential. Some projects have reduced atmospheric emissions and contamination of groundwater. Other projects have increased the competitiveness of enterprises in domestic and international markets and have sustained and in a few cases created employment opportunities. Others, fewer in number, have contributed to environmental problems, caused difficulties in maintaining productivity and quality standards and decreased the number of employment opportunities because of the need to rationalize manufacturing processes.

We conclude that potential contributions from Multilateral Fund investment projects to sustainable development could have been amplified with guidance for the technical staffs of the implementing agencies. Concerned with optimising resources and orchestrating global environmental efforts, we therefore suggest to systematically and explicitly integrate sustainability parameters into the future funding for mitigation of global environmental problems. Rethinking implementation strategies would be of particular value for Global Environment Facility industry related projects in the focal areas of climate change, international waters, ozone depletion, and persistent organic pollutants. There clearly is a potential to generate multiple beneficial impacts beyond the environmental objective if we mutually design, implement, and evaluate projects with the objective of maximizing their contribution to sustainable development.

Keywords: Global Environment Facility, Montreal Protocol, multilateral environmental agreements, sustainable development, technology transfer, and global.

Abbreviations: CO₂ – carbon dioxide; CFCs—chlorofluorocarbons; Global Environment Facility (GEF); GWP- global warming potential; HAPs- hydrocarbon aerosol propellants; HCFCs – hydrochlorofluorocarbons; HFCs- hydrofluorocarbons; IPCC- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; LDC- liquid carbon dioxide;

Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol – MLF; ODP ozone depleting potential; ODS – ozone depleting substances; UNDP- United Nations Development Programme; RMP- Refrigeration Management Plan; UNEP- United Nations Environment Programme; UNEP/OS- United Nations Environment Programme/ Ozone Secretariat; UNIDO- United Nations Industrial Development Organization; USEPA- United States Environmental Protection Agency.