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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
THE MULTILATERAL FUND FOR THE
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**FRAMEWORK FOR AN INFORMATION STRATEGY FOR THE MULTILATERAL
FUND (DECISION 37/1 (b))**

Introduction

1. In the context of the presentation of the Report on the Secretariat Activities at the 37th Meeting, a discussion ensued concerning the possibilities for increased exposure of the work of the Multilateral Fund. Some Executive Committee members supported the continued participation of Fund Secretariat staff in the network meetings. Others called for seizing the opportunity of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Meeting in Johannesburg to increase the visibility of the Multilateral Fund. Subsequently, the Executive Committee decided to place an information strategy framework for the Multilateral Fund as an item on the agenda of its 38th meeting.

2. Any information strategy must have a clear statement of mission in the form of well-defined objectives. The objectives must be achievable in the near term, given the finite life of the Multilateral Fund. For this reason, this document attempts to formulate such a framework for the development of an information strategy by reviewing existing information dissemination and opportunities for the future with the aim of soliciting views from Executive Committee members on the concrete objectives of a Multilateral Fund information strategy.

Existing Information Dissemination

3. The Multilateral Fund was the first multilateral financial mechanism established to enable compliance by a large number of developing countries (Article 5 countries) with scheduled ODS reductions according to a strict timeframe. The Fund finances the agreed incremental costs to achieve the mandated phase-out of ODS in all Article 5 countries, and has started its support for these countries eight years before the onset of the first control measure of the Montreal Protocol applicable to these countries.

4. During this grace period (from 1 January 1991 – 1 July 1999), the Multilateral Fund disbursed US \$845.47 million to achieve a phase-out of 117,141 ODP tonnes of ODS. Through July 2002, the Executive Committee has approved a total of US \$1.35 billion that when fully implemented should phase out 164,601 ODP tonnes of ODS consumption and 52,571 ODP tonnes of ODS production. The impact of this achievement is measured in several ways, for example:

- (a) Abatement of growth in the consumption and production of CFCs and halons and the subsequent gradual decrease to levels below the compliance baseline for the vast majority of Article 5 countries;
- (b) Introduction and sustainability of institutional capacity which paved the way for the assumption of almost full responsibility (and accountability) by Article 5 countries for achieving compliance.

5. This level of disbursement could not have been attained without the timely payment of contributions by almost all contributing Parties. The rate of contributions through 20 October 2002 was 89 per cent amounting to US \$1.4 billion of the US \$1.6 billion pledged.

The decision making of the Executive Committee that led *inter alia* to the operationalization of the concept of incremental costs has been participatory and all decisions were taken by consensus. The institutional infrastructure of the Multilateral Fund has been remarkably stable: small, but efficient offices managing the Fund Secretariat, and the Montreal Protocol units in UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO and the World Bank.

6. The informational aspect of the Multilateral Fund is multifaceted and multivariate. Information has been delivered through members of the Executive Committee, the Fund Secretariat and the implementing and bilateral agencies, NGOs, and Government representatives attending the Meetings of the Parties. This type of information focuses primarily on decisions of the Meetings of the Parties and the Executive Committee and their operationalization relating to payment of outstanding contributions and project-specific funding decisions, among others. The recipients of such information are relevant government entities, ozone officers (through network meetings or otherwise), and beneficiary enterprises, institutions, technicians, and ODS users.

7. Information was and is still communicated through missions undertaken by the Chief Officer either alone or jointly with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee. This type of information has been provided to acquaint governments, at the highest possible level, with the mission of the Multilateral Fund in assisting Article 5 countries in meeting their Montreal Protocol obligations. On more than one occasion, environment ministers from a sub-region were invited to one of their countries for one or two days of meetings with the Multilateral Fund delegation. Such missions were useful in bringing to the attention of governments the importance of ratifying amendments to the Protocol. They provided support to national ozone officers and ensured representation in the Montreal Protocol meetings (including meetings of the Executive Committee when pertinent) by officials at the decision making level or at least with direct access to the decision makers in their governments. It has to be emphasised that such missions targeted countries or sub-regions characterized by poor participation in the Montreal Protocol. For example, one mission focused on six Central American countries, three of which had considerable methyl bromide consumption, but had not ratified the Copenhagen Amendment (The three countries ratified the Amendment following the mission).

Opportunities for information dissemination

8. The current situation of information dissemination was described above. In addition to this, there are many other channels that could be explored. The overarching objective of an information strategy should be that information must serve the mission of the Multilateral Fund as a first priority.

9. Outreach to governments of both non-Article 5 and Article 5 countries should be enhanced to highlight first that in spite of the success of the Fund, its mission is not over, i.e., contributions will need to continue to be made and there must be more timely implementation of approved projects since compliance targets are at hand. The potential of accelerated phase-out should be contemplated through more government actions and other means.

10. Members of the Executive Committee who attend meetings of other conventions where the experience of the Multilateral Fund is relevant should draw attention to the Multilateral Fund

as appropriate. Given that the Montreal Protocol includes provisions that can affect trade, contact with the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) could highlight ozone issues in relation to the WTO work. Other avenues that could be explored include the UNEP's Committee of Permanent Representatives.

11. Efforts need to be made to ensure that implementation of the Montreal Protocol with Multilateral Fund assistance is placed on the agendas of regional ministerial meetings. For example the Fund could seek invitations to high level meetings of environment ministers such as:

- (a) The Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE);
- (b) The Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean;
and
- (c) The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN).

12. Actions are needed on an urgent basis to further develop the web site of the Multilateral Fund Secretariat. This would enable the public at large to learn more about the importance of the Fund and its meaning to future agreements of this nature and the health of the Earth's ozone layer and its impact on future generations.

13. Implementing agencies need to highlight in public utterances of their Montreal Protocol units staff, and in written reports on the implementation of the Montreal Protocol in Article 5 countries, the significant funding received by them from the Multilateral Fund. It should also be made clear to those attending workshops financed by the Fund that the source of resources for these workshops is the Multilateral Fund. Ozone Day celebrations should not only celebrate the Montreal Protocol, but also highlight the accomplishments of the Multilateral Fund in achieving the objectives of the Protocol.

14. Representatives of various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have participated in the meetings of the Executive Committee since its 3rd Meeting. They have observed the Committee's meetings; supported total ODS programmes, and reminded the public of the need for continuing financial support from donor countries. Their experiences with the Multilateral Fund should also be tapped to enhance the visibility of the achievement of the Fund.

Recommendation

The Secretariat would like to invite suggestions from Executive Committee members in particular regarding a statement of mission for the finalisation of an information strategy for the Multilateral Fund.
