

# GEF CEO Naoko Ishii Hails 25th Anniversary of Montreal Protocol

*Strong financial support from Global Environment Facility helped make Protocol one of world's most successful environmental pacts – delivering significant reductions in dangerous chemicals*

WASHINGTON, September 16, 2012 – The 25th anniversary of a landmark international agreement to protect the earth's ozone layer demonstrates the global benefits that can flow from concerted effort and cooperation to address environmental threats, the head of the Global Environment Facility said today. Dr. Naoko Ishii, CEO and Chairperson of the GEF, today hailed the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, regarded as one of the most effective treaties addressing threats to the global environment. The ozone layer in the earth's upper atmosphere protects living things from harmful ultraviolet rays from the sun. The phase-out of industrial chemicals under the Montreal Protocol has resulted not only in the recovery of the ozone layer but also has reduced greenhouse gas emissions that contribute significantly to climate change.

“In both its universal acceptance and its focused implementation, the Montreal Protocol is widely recognized as the most successful environmental agreement and is looked to as a model for resolving global environmental challenges,” said Dr. Ishii. “GEF investments have helped measurably restore one of our atmosphere's protective shields while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This demonstrates the multiplier effect we achieve when we identify synergies in our approach to environmental challenges.”

With 197 nations party to the accord, the Montreal Protocol is the only universally ratified treaty in United Nations history and has, to date, enabled reductions of more than 97% of all global consumption and production of controlled ozone depleting substances (ODS). As a result of the Montreal Protocol, concentration of ODS in the atmosphere have begun to decrease.

The GEF funds ozone-protection programs in countries with economies in transition. The GEF has assisted 18 such countries in phasing out ozone-depleting substances under the Montreal Protocol, investing US\$235 million in support of 29 projects and leveraging co-financing from other sources of an additional US\$247 million.

Dr. Ishii said that cooperation among the key implementing and funding agencies supporting the Montreal Protocol has been critical to the treaty's success. In addition to the Ozone Secretariat and the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol (MLF), the GEF has worked closely with the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization on projects related to the Protocol. Dr. Ishii today congratulated Marco Gonzales, Executive Secretary of the Ozone Secretariat, and Maria Nolan, chief officer of the MLF. On Wednesday, September 19, officials involved in the implementation of the Montreal Protocol will gather at the World Bank to celebrate the 25th anniversary.

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**About the GEF**

The GEF unites 182 countries in partnership with international institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs), and the private sector to address global environmental issues while supporting national sustainable development initiatives. Today the GEF is the largest public funder of projects to improve the global environment. An independently operating financial organization, the GEF provides grants for projects related to biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer, and persistent organic pollutants.

Since 1991, the GEF has achieved a strong track record with developing countries and countries with economies in transition, providing \$10.5 billion in grants and leveraging \$51 billion in co-financing for over 2,700 projects in over 165 countries. Through its Small Grants Programme (SGP), the GEF has also made more than 14,000 small grants directly to civil society and community based organizations, totaling \$634 million. For more information, visit [www.thegef.org](http://www.thegef.org).

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