



Japan: Major Economies Promote Montreal Protocol, Fast Action on Climate

Thailand: Montreal Parties Heed Call, Make Further Climate Progress

Bangkok, Thailand 11 July 2008 – This week leaders of the world’s 17 major economies pledged to “continue to promote actions under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer for the benefit of the global climate system.” The leaders recognized the “need for urgent action” and committed to act “without delay” to strengthen the Montreal Protocol for the benefit of the climate system.

The leaders’ pledge provided a powerful boost to the Montreal Protocol Parties’ meeting this week in Bangkok. Argentina, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Mauritius have proposed strengthening the Protocol to address the 7.4 billion tons of CO₂-eq. that will be emitted by 2015 from discarded products and equipment if not properly recovered and destroyed. Destruction of these substances—including CFCs and HCFCs in developed countries, as well as additional CFCs in developing countries—would also significantly benefit the ozone layer, saving lives and reducing cancers and cataracts.

The major economies include Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, the European Union, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the U.S. Collectively, they are responsible for 80% of global climate emissions. The leaders met at the Major Economies Meeting in Toyako, Hokkaido, Japan 9 July following the conclusion of the Group of 8 meeting this week.

Last year the G8 committed to “accelerating the phase-out of HCFCs in a way that supports energy efficiency and climate change objectives” under the Montreal Protocol. The Montreal Protocol Parties followed through on the G8 commitment, reaching consensus at the 20th anniversary meeting in September 2007 to speed the phase-out of HCFCs, providing up to 16 billion tons or more of CO₂-eq. in climate mitigation by 2040, significantly more than the Kyoto Protocol seeks during its first commitment period.

Final negotiations on the Montreal Protocol banks proposals for this year will take place 16-20 November 2008, in Doha, Qatar. Informal discussions also were launched in Bangkok this week on the value of moving HFCs from the Kyoto Protocol to the Montreal Protocol, where they could be effectively phased-out in favor of more environmentally friendly substitutes.

Durwood Zaelke, President of IGSD, stated that “The world’s leaders recognize the need for urgent action on climate change, and understand that the Montreal Protocol can deliver immediate climate benefits as it has been doing for the past 20 years.” Antonio Oposa, negotiator from Micronesia, noted that “when early voluntary actions and national laws are included, the effort to eliminate ozone depleting substances has delayed climate change 35 to 41 years.” “The Montreal Protocol has been the world’s life-preserver,” stated Sateev Seebaluck, chief negotiator for Mauritius, “keeping us from passing tipping points for abrupt and irreversible climate changes, including catastrophic sea-level rise—tipping points that may be as close as 10 years away.”

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