



Ozone Treaty Will Start Cutting More Climate Emissions

Unique Military Partnership Will Help Destroy Potent Greenhouse Gas Stockpiles

\$490 Million Committed for Three-Year Effort to Protect Ozone and Climate

Doha, Qatar, 20 November 2008 – Today the 193 Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer—representing virtually all countries of the world—agreed for the second year in a row to strengthen their treaty to provide additional protection for both the ozone layer and the climate system.

The Parties agreed to start collecting and destroying stockpiles of unwanted chemicals that otherwise will cancel the hoped for gains of the current climate treaty; to start discussions on moving hydrofluorocarbons, or HFCs, from the climate treaty to the stricter Montreal Protocol; and to provide USD \$490 million over three years to assist developing countries meet mandatory commitments to protect the ozone layer and climate system.

Several countries also announced a unique partnership among militaries, environmental agencies, and non-governmental groups to help destroy the dangerous stockpiles and other unwanted chemicals that threaten the environment.

Last September, the Parties took the first step towards becoming a more explicit climate treaty by accelerating the phase-out of hydrochlorofluorocarbons, or HCFCs, in a way that promotes both ozone and climate benefits. The decision was “perhaps the most important breakthrough in an international environmental negotiation process for at least five or six years,” according to Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme.

Today the Parties strengthened their treaty further by agreeing to start collecting and destroying ozone-depleting substances from stockpiles and from discarded products and equipment that are the easiest to reach. These “reachable” substances will be emitted by 2015 without action under the Montreal Protocol. Destroying them will speed recovery of the ozone layer by up to two years, and avoid up to 6 billion tonnes or more of CO₂-eq. in climate emissions. An additional 14 or more billion tonnes of CO₂-eq. could be emitted later from these sources unless further action is taken.

Argentina submitted a formal proposal earlier this year to collect and destroy the stockpiles and “banks” of substances in discarded products and equipment. Micronesia and Mauritius offered a joint proposal because destroying banks can provide fast climate mitigation and help avoid passing thresholds for abrupt climate changes, including the disintegration of the Greenland Ice Sheet, which would lead to many meters of sea level

rise and threaten all low-lying island and coastal countries. Today's consensus agreement was based on these proposals.

Romina Picolotti, Argentina's Minister of Environment, stated, "We recognize the importance of near term climate mitigation, as well as long term mitigation, and believe the 6 billion tonnes of CO₂-eq. in banks that will otherwise be emitted by 2015 is a critical target we can address today." She praised the Montreal Protocol Parties for their "cooperative spirit and their ability to act fast" and stated that "the Montreal Protocol is a model for the world." (For comparison, Parties to the Kyoto climate treaty are trying to reduce their climate emissions by 1 billion tonnes per year below 1990 levels during the treaty's initial commitment period from 2008 to 2012.)

Recognizing the urgency of acting on banks, Australia, The Netherlands, and the United States announced at Doha that they will provide the expertise of their militaries to assist with the global management and destruction of banks. This unique partnership to protect the climate system and the ozone layer also will include Argentina and Mauritius, as well as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, various divisions of the United Nations, and organizations such as the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development and the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement.

"The military in many countries have been at the forefront of efforts to phase out ozone depleting substances," said Marco Gonzalez, executive secretary of the Montreal Protocol's Ozone Secretariat. "Their experience can be invaluable for developing countries facing similar challenges." "The military's leadership shown by these partners will earn the praise of environmentalists and compliance officials from around the world," said Durwood Zaelke, President of IGSD, and Director of INECE, a network of over 4,000 environmental authorities in more than 150 countries. "Protecting the earth against climate change is an environmental security campaign that we all support."

Developed country Parties to the Montreal Protocol Parties also agreed to provide USD \$490 million in funding over three years to assist developing countries meet their mandatory treaty obligations. This includes initial funding to immediately begin pilot projects for collection and destruction of the "reachable" banks. The Parties directed the treaty secretariat to explore co-financing, including the carbon markets. The majority of the new funds are to start implementing last year's decision to accelerate the phase-out of HCFCs in a way that promotes climate benefits as well as ozone benefits.

The Montreal Protocol Parties also agreed in Doha to begin discussions on whether to move HFCs from the climate treaty to the stricter Montreal Protocol, where HFCs with a high global warming potential could be phased-out. HFCs are substitutes for the HCFCs that are already being phased-out by the Protocol. They are projected to grow at an alarming rate unless further action is taken.

Moving HFCs to the Montreal Protocol could pave the way for moving the four other non-CO₂ gases in the climate treaty to separate protocols, where they could be more strictly controlled. "Removing the five non-CO₂ gases would still leave the climate treaty

to do the lion's share of climate mitigation," said Zaelke. Zaelke added that, "the advantage of 'disaggregating' the climate problem this way would be to allow separate governance structures that could strictly regulate each of the non-CO₂ gases."

Antonio Oposa, representing Micronesia, stated, "This could provide faster climate mitigation in many cases, which is what island countries need to survive." He added, "There is a clear and present danger of abrupt and catastrophic climate changes in the near future. In the face of these threats, we must act not only with a sense of urgency, but a sense of emergency."

Sateaved Seebaluck from Mauritius added that, "The Montreal Protocol has been the world's life-preserver, keeping us from passing tipping points for sea-level rise--tipping points that may be as close as 10 years away." "Being a small island developing state, we are most exposed and therefore vulnerable to the impacts of climate change," said Lormus Bundhoo, Mauritius's Minister of Environment. He added that, "every action counts even if it is not within the ambit of the Kyoto Protocol."

Moving HFCs to the Montreal Protocol was suggested by Argentina in the run-up to last year's historic decision to accelerate the phase-out of HCFCs. Zaelke and co-authors Donald Kaniaru, Rajendra Shende, and Scott Stone made the same suggestion in an article published last year, along with other measures to protect climate and ozone protection, including measures to address banks, feedstocks and process agents, and to strengthen compliance.

In July 2008, the 17 Major Economies recognized the need for urgent action under the Montreal Protocol for the benefit of the global climate system and committed to take such action. Today's decisions start implementing this commitment to climate protection. Zaelke stated, "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 more than 20 years."

In a statement presented by Marco Gonzalez, Achim Steiner said, "Many look to the Montreal Protocol as a shining example of international environmental cooperation. It is time now to make other crucial multilateral environmental agreements work equally as well and equally as hard. In a few short weeks many of the same governments here in Doha will be in Poznan, Poland for the next round of climate negotiations under the UN climate convention." He added that we need to "Take the 'can do' spirit of the Montreal Protocol to Poland."

The Montreal Protocol has successfully phased out more than 95 percent of 97 ozone-depleting substances since it began in 1987. Because many substances that deplete ozone also warm the climate, the Montreal Protocol has delayed climate change by up to 12 years through the mitigation of 135 billion tonnes of CO₂-eq between 1990 and 2010. When early voluntary actions and national laws are included, the effort to eliminate ozone depleting substances has delayed climate change 35 to 41 years.

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