



Strengthened Ozone Treaty Provides Powerful Climate Mitigation

Montreal, Sunday, 23 September 2007 – The 191 Parties to the Montreal Protocol reached a historic agreement late Friday night to strengthen the ozone treaty to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 25 billion tons of CO₂ equivalent—more than the Kyoto Protocol’s initial reduction target from 2008 to 2012.

"Capturing more than Kyoto's initial climate reductions is an extraordinary accomplishment," said Durwood Zaelke, the President of the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development, which coordinated a year-long effort to educate countries about the Montreal Protocol’s climate benefits. He added "This historic decision marks the

first time that all nations of the world—both developing and developed—have agreed to mandatory climate reductions. This spirit of cooperation is a big boost for the post-2012 climate negotiations." The decision, reached after seven days of negotiations, also will advance the recovery of the ozone layer by several years.



**Durwood Zaelke,
advocate for climate
protection from ozone
treaty**

According to Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, "It's perhaps the most important breakthrough in an environmental negotiation process for at least five or six years, because it sets a very specific target with an ambitious timetable." Steiner added, "Historic is an often over-used word but not in the case of this agreement made in Montreal. Governments had a golden opportunity to deal with the twin challenges of climate change and protecting the ozone layer and governments took it. The precise and final savings in terms of greenhouse gas emissions could amount to several billions of tonnes illustrating the complementarities of international environmental agreements."

The decision speeds up by ten years the phase-out of HCFCs, chemicals that destroy the ozone layer and contribute to climate change. As part of the deal, developed countries promised to help developing countries meet their new phase-out obligations through continued financial support of a technology fund. [*See summary of decision, below, with link to official UN version.*]

Success was achieved by an unusual coalition of developing and developed countries. Argentina and Brazil led developing countries, with strong support from low-lying island and coastal countries, including Micronesia, Mauritius, and Mauritania, who are concerned that rising sea-levels threaten their very existence.

The United States proposed the most aggressive phase-out schedule, supported by other G8 countries, along with Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, and Iceland. Argentina and Brazil also proposed an aggressive phase-out of HCFCs, and worked effectively to build support. India and Mexico also were key players.

China, which has the largest HCFC production and consumption, continued its long history of faithful participation in the Montreal Protocol by joining the consensus, after long and difficult negotiations. "China's gracious statement of support in the final high-level session was the highlight of the meeting," said Zaelke. "China demonstrated true leadership and commitment to the spirit of cooperation that is the heart of the Montreal Protocol", he added.

"The decision is an enormous achievement for the environment," said Dan Reifsnyder, lead U.S. negotiator. "When we first proposed an accelerated phase-out for HCFCs, we knew it would be a difficult undertaking but we are thrilled with the momentum it generated so quickly and now with the momentous result—not only for the ozone layer but also for the climate system."

The United States is hosting a meeting of the world's largest climate emitters September 27-28 in Washington, DC. US leadership in Montreal to accelerate the phase-out of HCFCs in a way that supports energy efficiency and climate change objectives should give a boost to these talks.



**Romina Picolotti,
Argentina's Minister
of Environment**

Argentina's Environmental Minister Romina Picolotti was an early and outspoken champion of this issue. Argentina suffers from ozone-related environmental and health impacts due to its close proximity to the Antarctic. "Our success is important for the ozone layer, and even more important for the climate, as it shows us what we can do when we have the spirit to cooperate," said Ms.

Picolotti. Minister Picolotti also praised the efforts of the Dutch HCFC negotiating group chair, Maas Goote, noting that "Goote's tough professionalism and his good humor played a key role in securing agreement." Zaelke agreed, stating that "Chairing this negotiation took tremendous skill and persistence, and Maas Goote had it all." "Argentina's lead negotiator, Ana Maria Kleymeyer, also did a tremendous job," he added.

"This was the right idea at the right time with the right team," said Dr. Husamuddin Ahmadzai, Senior Advisor for Enforcement and Implementation, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. "The Montreal Protocol's role in reducing climate emissions should be heralded throughout the world," he added.

Without the Montreal Protocol, and earlier efforts to reduce CFCs starting in 1974 when Drs. Rowland & Molina first warned of their danger, climate impacts from ozone depleting substances would almost have matched emissions from CO₂ by 2010. "This early action on ozone has delayed climate change up to a Planet-saving 35-41 years," said Scott Stone, Research Fellow at the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development, referring to the seminal science paper calculating the climate benefits of the Montreal Protocol by Guus Velders of the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, and colleagues at NASA, DuPont, and the US

EPA. Stone also complimented Maas Goote as chair, stating that “Maas Goote reminded the countries of the spirit of Montreal and like a great coach got everyone to play their ‘A’ game for the Planet.”



Scott Stone,
policy advisor
for advancing
HCFC phase-out

Micronesia, Mauritius, and Mauritania, who all made proposals to speed the HCFC phase-out, reminded countries throughout the negotiations that the 25 billion tons of CO₂ equivalent on the negotiating table would help keep the Planet from reaching the "tipping point" for abrupt and irreversible climate change, including catastrophic sea-level rise.

"For small-island states, reaching consensus on this decision was a matter of survival," said Kandhi Elieisar, Assistant Secretary for Asia-Pacific Multilateral Affairs of Micronesia.

Mr. Sateaved Seebaluck, Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Environment for Mauritius stated that "We proved to the world that multilateralism can produce good results when the spirit of trust and cooperation prevails. The success of these negotiations will remain a landmark in the history of mankind and it is the best gift we could give ourselves on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Protocol."

"It is yet another long stride in protection of life. My only hope is that other multilateral environmental agreements take this example and emulate the Montreal Protocol. And when we look forward that we can carry the same spirit to the negotiations for the new climate treaty that will follow the Kyoto Protocol," added Seebaluck.

Marco Gonzalez, Executive Secretary for the UNEP Ozone Secretariat in Nairobi, stated that “The progress achieved over 20 years and continued this week demonstrates to the world that developed and developing countries can work together to meet global challenges. Here this week numerous nations including China, India, the United States and the European Union, demonstrated the art of the possible and solidarity in advancing the international environmental agenda on both ozone and now increasingly on climate change.”



David Doniger,
NRDC
Photo courtesy of
Earth Negotiations
Bulletin

David Doniger, policy director of the climate center at the Natural Resources Defense Council said, “This week's deal will sharply cut global emissions, especially by reducing large HCFC increases expected in the next decade from China and India.” He added, “The Bush administration deserves credit for working with other countries to push for faster cuts in HCFCs. The quicker phaseout will help heal the ozone layer and reduce skin cancer. Reducing HCFCs also helps cut global warming pollution.” But he cautioned in relation to President Bush's meeting with large emitters this week that “We could not have protected the ozone layer with voluntary pledges and non-binding goals. That won't work for global warming either.”

Zaelke said, "Our success in strengthening the Montreal Protocol to explicitly tackle climate mitigation should give us the courage we need to move forward with a strong post-Kyoto climate agreement, starting in December in Bali," when negotiators meet to discuss the climate treaty that

will succeed the Kyoto agreement. He continued, "It also gives us some key lessons to consider as we design the post-Kyoto climate regime, including that a Montreal-type regulatory approach can work effectively and efficiently to deliver real climate reductions."

Summary of Decision to Accelerate the Phase-out of HCFCs

Developing Country Parties:

Base level 2009-2010 average
Freeze on 1 Jan 2013
10% reduction on 1 Jan 2015
35% on 1 Jan 2020
67.5% on 1 Jan 2025
Continuing use of 2.5% from 2030 to 2040

Developed Country Parties:

75% reduction on 1 Jan 2010
90% on 1 Jan 2015
Continuing use of 0.5% from 2020 to 2030

Full decision at http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting_Documents/mop/19mop/MOP_19_ReportE.pdf
(page 3, para F).

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www.igsd.org
www.ozone-climate.org/

STEPHEN O. ANDERSON, K. MADHAVA SARMA & KRISTEN N. TADDONIO, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER FOR THE OZONE LAYER: LESSONS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE (2007).

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THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL – CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS: OZONE LAYER AND CLIMATE PROTECTION (Donald Kaniaru ed., 2007).

<http://www.igsd.org/Montreal-Protocol-book.pdf>