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India Moves a Step Closer to Cutting HFCs Under Montreal Protocol

Agrees at White House Today to Immediately Convene Discussion

Accounting and Reporting Would Remain Under UNFCCC

Washington, DC, 27 September 2013—Today Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India took another step forward in climate protection by agreeing with President Obama that India would immediately convene discussions of phasing down HFCs under the Montreal Protocol.

This follows the Prime Minister's commitment in the *G20 Leaders' Declaration* earlier this month to use the Montreal Protocol to phase down HFCs, refrigerants known as super greenhouses for their powerful impact on global warming. President Xi Jinping of China reached agreement with President Obama on the margins of the G20 to start negotiations under the Montreal Protocol to phase down HFCs. (*See IGSD [press release](#) 6 September 2013*).

“It’s increasingly obvious that we need to cut HFCs under the Montreal Protocol,” said Durwood Zaelke, President of the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development. “It’s the biggest, fastest, and cheapest piece of climate mitigation available to the world today. Cutting HFCs can avoid up to 0.5°C in global warming by the end of the century.”

The relevant paragraph from the joint statement from President Obama and Prime Minister Singh follows:

“The two leaders agreed to immediately convene the India-U.S. Task Force on hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) to discuss, inter alia, multilateral approaches that include using the expertise and the institutions of the Montreal Protocol to phase down the consumption and production of HFCs, based on economically-viable and technically feasible alternatives, and include HFCs within the scope of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol for accounting and reporting of emissions....

They also supported complementary initiatives, through multilateral approaches that include using the expertise and the institutions of the Montreal Protocol to phase down the production and the consumption of HFCs, based on the examination of economically viable and technically feasible alternatives. They will continue to include HFCs within the scope of UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol for accounting and reporting of emissions.”

IPCC chairman Rajendra Pachauri explained earlier this week in an interview with the *Financial Times* that “Himalayan glaciers are melting so fast they could affect the water supplies of nearly a billion people in South and South East Asia within 22 years... which affect, as we had estimated, 500m people in south Asia and 250m people in China.”

“Glacial melt and other climate impacts are occurring faster and causing more damage than previously predicted just a few years ago,” said Zaelke. “We need fast action to address these growing climate

impacts, starting with cuts to HFCs and other short-lived climate pollutants to complement cuts in long-lived CO₂.”

UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization and other scientists estimate that cutting HFCs and the other short-lived climate pollutants can cut the rate of global warming in half, cut Arctic warming by two-thirds, and cut warming in high elevation regions of the Himalayas and Tibet by at least half.

The U.S.-India Joint Statement is [here](#)

The *G20 Leaders' Declaration* is [here](#)