



Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development

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***BBC World Highlights Ozone Treaty's Potential
to Help or Hurt Climate System***

Washington, DC, May 6, 2011 – Beginning tomorrow, May 7, *BBC World* will air a documentary highlighting the potential of the Montreal Protocol ozone treaty to fight climate change. “The 21 Gigatonne Timebomb” is part of the Nature Inc. series and focuses on the Montreal Protocol’s environmental success to date and its role in future climate mitigation, in particular, phasing out the production and use of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

HFCs are the current ozone-friendly substitutes for more potent HCFCs under the Protocol, but also double as powerful greenhouse gases with hundreds to thousands the warming potential of carbon dioxide. HCFCs are the substitutes that replaced the original group of ozone-damaging chemicals, CFCs.

The Montreal Protocol is well-known for its success in protecting the ozone layer, but the treaty has also contributed significantly – many times more than the Kyoto Protocol – to the protection of the climate system from phasing out almost 100 ozone-depleting and climate warming chemicals by almost 100 percent, delaying climate change by up to 12 years. The treaty’s resounding success – due in great part to its strong financial mechanism, rapid scientific, technology, and economic assessments, low costs, and the support of all 196 countries of the world - has led many countries to call for its leadership on climate change.

However, if the Montreal Protocol continues on its current path to a full transition into HFCs, the treaty will be responsible for a significant portion of climate change emissions. HFCs are growing so fast that they will contribute about 6 billion tonnes of CO₂-equivalent per year to climate change by 2050 if they are not controlled. This is about one-third of the emissions due to CO₂ itself, assuming the world succeeds in stabilizing CO₂ emissions at 450 parts per million by that date.

“Phasing out HFCs is the single biggest, fastest, most secure, and cheapest climate mitigation available today - 100 billion tonnes of CO₂-equivalent through the Montreal Protocol, the treaty that never fails, at a cost that may be as low as \$0.10 per tonne,” said Durwood Zaelke, President of the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development. “More than 90 countries have already expressed their support for using the Montreal Protocol to phase down HFCs.”

The effort to eliminate HFCs under the Montreal Protocol is being led by the Federated States of Micronesia on behalf of all vulnerable countries. Micronesia proposed an amendment to the ozone treaty in 2009 and 2010 to phase down the upstream production and use of HFCs; downstream emissions of HFCs would remain under the Kyoto Protocol. The North American countries of the United States, Mexico, and Canada followed with a similar proposal.

Micronesia is preparing a similar proposal to re-submit this month; the North American countries are expected to re-submit their proposal as well.

Although some countries, such as China and India, were not ready to support the HFC proposals last year, recent events show that interest is growing for taking action on HFCs under Montreal.

In February, the U.S. and India announced that they were forming an HFC Task Force to analyze strategies for eliminating the high-GWP HFCs, following a joint workshop and consultations with stakeholders in New Delhi. The new task force is expected to submit a report by August 1 of this year, in advance of the Montreal Protocol's mid-year, Open-Ended Working Group meeting August 1-5 in Bangkok. India's Minister of Environment and Forests, Jairam Ramesh, stated at the joint HFC workshop that, "With international financing and technology support, there is no reason why India should not lead in the phase-down of HFCs."

"The 21 Gigatonne Timebomb" was originally proposed by IGSD, and produced by Dev.TV. The film features interviews with Micronesia's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Masao Nakayama; Micronesia's Montreal Protocol negotiator, Antonio Oposa; head of the UN Environment Programme's Energy and OzonAction office in Paris, Rajendra Shende; and Environmental Investigation Agency f-gas campaigner, Samuel LaBudde, among others.

The program will air on *BBC World* on the following dates and times: Saturday, May 7 at 5:30am (EDT), 5:30pm (EDT), and 10:30pm (EDT); and Sunday, May 8 at 11:30am (EDT). To view the broadcast schedule for other regions, please visit: <http://www.bbcworldnews.com/pages/schedules.aspx>.

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The Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development's mission is to promote just and sustainable societies and to protect the environment by advancing the understanding, development and implementation of effective, accountable and democratic systems of governance for sustainable development.

Beginning in 2006, the Institute embarked on a "fast-action" climate mitigation campaign to promote non-CO₂ strategies that will result in significant emissions reductions in the near-term, to complement cuts in CO₂ which are essential for the long-term. These strategies include reducing emissions of local air pollutants such as black carbon, methane, and tropospheric ozone; mitigation of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) through the Montreal Protocol ozone treaty; and carbon-negative measures such as biosequestration through expanded biochar production.

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