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“Perfectly Cool” Airing on BBC World September 11, 2009

An Earth Report documentary on how air conditioning is impacting ozone and climate

Washington, D.C., September 10, 2009 – “Perfectly Cool”, an Earth Report documentary on air conditioning coolants which are damaging both the ozone layer and climate system, will air on BBC World beginning this Friday, September 11, 2009. “Perfectly Cool” is set in China, where a growing population with rising standards of living is now finding AC systems affordable, and necessary, to keep cool.

Unfortunately, most consumers are unaware that the coolants used in AC systems are both bad for the ozone and bad for climate. HCFCs, the most commonly used refrigerant, were introduced as a substitute for CFCs, once it became widely known in the late 1980s that CFCs were destroying the ozone layer. Though less potent than CFCs, HCFCs still pose a significant threat to the ozone layer and are also powerful greenhouse gases. The Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer is phasing them out.

The 191 Parties agreed in 2007 to accelerate the HCFC phase-out schedule to reap significant benefits for climate – up to 16 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide-equivalent through 2040. But now there is a new problem; the substitutes for HCFCs - HFCs - pose an even greater threat to the environment.

“While HFCs don’t deplete the ozone layer, they’re major greenhouse gases that threaten to undo any progress made on the climate front if we allow them to grow at the current rate,” said Durwood Zaelke, Director of the INECE Secretariat and President of the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development (IGSD). “Replacing HFCs with alternative refrigerants is critical to avoiding the dangerous consequences of abrupt and irreversible climate change.”

AC industry officials in China are aware of the environmental impacts associated with HCFCs and HFCs, and at least one major company is testing possible alternatives, such as propane. While their goal is to create an environmentally-friendly product, success in sales will ultimately determine the product’s future.

Earth Report is produced by the Television Trust for the Environment and is BBC World’s premier environmental series viewed by millions worldwide. “Perfectly Cool” Earth Report has been directed by filmmaker Douglas Varchol and produced with the generous support of the UN

Environment Programme, the UN Development Programme, GTZ, the World Bank, the UN Industrial Development Organization, IGSD, and INECE.

The film will be broadcast on Friday, 11 September at 19:30, with repeats on Saturday, 12 September at 04:30; Monday, 14 September at 12:30 (Asia Pacific only); Tuesday, 15 September at 15.30 and Wednesday, 16 September at 01.30 (except Asia Pacific, Middle East and South Asia). All times are in the UK time zone, GMT; please check your [BBC World station](#) for local screenings.

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The International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE) links the environmental compliance and enforcement efforts of more than 4,000 practitioners - inspectors, prosecutors, regulators, parliamentarians, judges, and NGOs - from 150 countries, through training and capacity building programs, raising awareness, and enhancing enforcement cooperation. To learn more about INECE, please visit <http://inece.org/>.

The mission of the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development 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. The Institute brings together professionals from around the world who are committed to strengthening environmental law and institutions to promote sustainable development. For more information on the Institute, please visit <http://igsd.org/>.