



MOP25 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2013

MOP25 convened for the first day of the HLS on Thursday, 24 October, in Bangkok, Thailand.

Following opening statements from dignitaries, delegates heard reports on: the status of ratification; the work of the assessment panels; and the MLF. Delegates heard national statements during the morning and afternoon plenary sessions. Contact and discussion groups met to discuss: additional information on ODS alternatives; TOR for the study on the MLF replenishment for 2015-2017; additional funding for the MLF to maximize the climate benefit of the accelerated phase-out of HCFCs; and HFCs management.

In the evening, delegates attended a dinner hosted by the Government of Thailand.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

MOP24 President Raja Hassan Abbas (Pakistan) opened proceedings, lauding parties for their commitment to implementing the Protocol. Noting challenges ahead, including the need for additional information on ODS alternatives, he cautioned against “derailing” the protection of the ozone layer by failing to reach consensus.

Marco González, Executive Secretary, highlighted the Montreal Protocol as an exemplary model of good governance. He discussed work on phasing out HCFCs, saying this presents both challenges and opportunities and urged delegates to continue striving towards new ways to protect the ozone layer.

Prasert Boonchaisuk, Minister of Industry, Thailand, urged parties to bear the challenges and needs of developing nations in mind during their deliberations and underscored the economic and technological barriers to successful implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS: MOP25 elected, by acclamation, Oleksandr Sushko (Ukraine) as MOP25 President. They also elected Harry Kalaba (Zambia), Italo Cordoba (El Salvador) and Malcolm McKee (New Zealand) as Vice Presidents. Juan Miguel Cuna (the Philippines) was elected as Rapporteur. Delegates adopted the agenda without amendment.

On the credentials of representatives, Sushko asked delegations to finalize their submissions in order to allow the Secretariat to announce them as scheduled.

STATUS OF RATIFICATION OF THE VIENNA CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE OZONE LAYER, THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL AND THE AMENDMENTS TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL:

Sushko congratulated new members that have ratified the Montreal Protocol and its amendments, including: Kazakhstan (Beijing Amendment); Mauritania (Beijing Amendment); Libya (Montreal and Beijing Amendments); and Saudi Arabia (Montreal and Beijing Amendments).

PRESENTATIONS BY THE ASSESSMENT PANELS ON THE STATUS OF THEIR WORK, INCLUDING THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS: The three panels provided updates on work undertaken in preparation for their 2014 Quadrennial Assessment Reports.

SAP: Ayité-Lô Ajavon (Togo) said that the aim of the report is to improve information availability to enhance decision-making. He said that the publication is expected to be ready in June 2014, and highlighted the main chapters featured in the report, including updates on, *inter alia*, ODS and the current state of the global and polar ozone layers. He also noted chapters on stratospheric ozone changes and climate; and a projection of scenarios, information, and options for policymakers.

EEAP: Nigel Paul (UK) reported on the EEAP’s progress toward completing its quadrennial assessment report, scheduled for release in 2014. He said that it will consider key issues, including the effects that changes in UV radiation and ozone depletion have on: physical, biological and environmental processes; human health; crops and terrestrial ecosystems; aquatic ecosystems; global chemical cycling; tropospheric chemistry and air quality; and materials.

TEAP: Bella Maranion (US) reported on activities leading up to the TEAP 2014 assessment report, including the work of its six TOCs. Regarding methyl bromide phase-out, she explained that Article 5 parties have had difficulty adopting alternatives due to economic challenges. Similarly, technical, regulatory and economic issues persist among non-Article 5 countries in the strawberry nursery and fruit sectors.

PRESENTATION BY MLF: Fiona Walters (UK) shared the MLF’s achievements and future work plans including, *inter alia*: HCFC phase-out management plans (HPMPs); HCFC production sector guidelines; HCFC phase-out in China; contributions to the MLF; and the climate impact indicator for ODS phase-out.

STATEMENTS BY HEADS OF DELEGATION: ZIMBABWE said that with HCFC phase-out still in a preliminary stage, developing countries will need continued funding and financial and technical support for refrigeration and air conditioning. CHINA expressed willingness to work with the international community to agree on a multilateral solution to phase down HFCs.



Acknowledging the need to address the availability of alternatives to HFCs, the US observed that parties in the past have not allowed uncertainty to prevent them from taking action. MOZAMBIQUE called for technology transfer, the provision of economic incentives and ongoing knowledge sharing between stakeholders to further the implementation of the Protocol. SOLOMON ISLANDS called for a representative from SIDS to be included in the composition of the ExCo.

BAHRAIN said it has passed a national law encompassing all ODS, established a quota system and initiated steps to implement its HPMP, which is consistent with the phase-out schedule. He urged parties not to adopt the HFC-related amendment until more information is made available. The PHILIPPINES said it is implementing its HPMP and addressing challenges, including: the illegal trade in ODS; the disposal of its ODS stockpile; and the continued use of HCFC-141b as a flushing agent.

INDONESIA reported that it had successfully met the objectives to phase-out CFCs, Halons, CTC, methyl chloroform and methyl bromide for non-QPS uses and requested clearer information on the legal implications of HFC phase-down. BURKINA FASO stressed the importance of further involving developing countries in the Montreal Protocol community and stated that the ozone agenda cannot be perceived as an issue only for “rich” countries. SOUTH AFRICA called for approaching the proposal to phase down HFCs with caution.

KENYA urged efficient use of MLF resources to ensure compliance with the Protocol and supported continued capacity building for Article 5 countries. SAUDI ARABIA mentioned its recent ratification of the Beijing Amendment, and said that as HFCs are not ozone depleting, they should fall within the ambit of the UNFCCC.

BANGLADESH said that public-private partnerships have enabled it to be successful in meeting its HCFC phase-out targets. COOK ISLANDS requested that the Montreal Protocol conduct an assessment study on the development costs of: ODS phase-out; and replacement technologies that are ozone- and climate-friendly as well as energy efficient. He further requested the Montreal Protocol to take into account the costs of safe disposal of replaced ODS for SIDS and the Pacific Islands.

The EU noted plans to phase down HFCs in the region and said that this would encourage the development of low-GWP alternatives. He called on parties to provide markets with the correct incentives to hasten this process.

REPUBLIC OF CONGO recalled successful domestic actions funded by the MLF that were crucial to compliance with the Montreal Protocol’s obligations. DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES’ REPUBLIC OF KOREA reported that it had already implemented 26 projects responsible for the phase out of CTCs and CFCs. She regretted, however, the delayed approval of its HPMP project by the MLF.

COSTA RICA highlighted the need for improved coordination between the Montreal Protocol and the Kyoto Protocol and stressed that it is working toward becoming the first carbon-neutral country in the world by 2021.

FIJI cautioned against switching to new technologies “too fast and too early” as they are not always adequate. SIERRA LEONE highlighted their successful phase out of CFCs by 2010 and requested additional funding to mitigate ODS that maximize climate benefits.

The DOMINICAN REPUBLIC argued that phasing out ODS is fundamental to coping with the threat of climate change. BRAZIL said that developed countries would need to channel additional resources through the MLF to ensure the successful

phase down of HCFCs in developing countries. The MALDIVES noted her country’s extreme vulnerability to sea level rise and said that it is imperative that the Protocol addresses HFCs, “a side effect of the Montreal Protocol.” TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO said that parties should address ODS phase-out in a way so as not to affect the climate system.

DISCUSSION GROUP ON HFC MANAGEMENT

The group met in the morning and afternoon to continue discussions on the technical, financial and legal aspects of HFCs management.

On financial aspects, CHINA highlighted concerns with the policies and procedures of the MLF, saying that they may need to be reconsidered. INDIA observed that full funding is required for HFC phase-down, as industry will not agree to phase down HFC consumption and production if compensation is provided on an incremental cost basis.

The US acknowledged concerns on the adequacy of funding under the MLF, stating that replenishment negotiations are by their nature contentious. He observed that the current contribution of HFCs to global warming is relatively small but growing rapidly, which could significantly offset progress made in other areas of climate mitigation. He maintained that it would be useful to request the TEAP to prepare an assessment of finance required for HFC phase-down.

On legal issues, the US, citing the Vienna Convention as a basis for phasing down HFCs, pointed out that: the proposed amendment supports the climate change regime; the Rio+20 outcome document endorses a gradual phase down of the consumption and production of HFCs; and that G20 leaders have found a way forward for phasing down HFCs under the Montreal Protocol.

The EU stressed that political will is required for phasing down HFCs. He said more time is needed to move the debate forward, including through workshops and additional sessions of the OEWG in the near future. CHINA said legal issues are crucial and need to be resolved. She also asserted that the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol should send a clear message to the Montreal Protocol on HFCs. MEXICO proposed a joint Montreal Protocol/UNFCCC working group to consider cross-cutting issues.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The HLS opened Thursday with a traditional Thai dance performance. Despite the beauty and precision of the dancers’ movements, parties continued to step on one another’s toes during negotiations. As delegations vaunted their successful ODS phase-out strategies, several used the opportunity not only to spotlight the concrete contributions of the MLF, but also to reiterate their reservations on the “fast” and “inappropriate” advancement of the proposed amendments to the Montreal Protocol.

Many echoed the need for new and additional funding for the MLF, particularly since the agreement on the accelerated phase out of HCFCs in Article 5 countries. Some underscored that if parties are struggling to agree on HPMP funding, there is a long road ahead for financing of HFCs to be agreed upon. This was echoed by one delegate, saying that HFC phase-down will have to be fully funded, as there is no incentive for industry to take action otherwise.

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The Earth Negotiations Bulletin summary and analysis of MOP25 will be available on Monday, 28 October 2013, online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/ozone/mop25/>