

MOP 34 Highlights: Monday 31 October 2022

As the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer celebrates its 35th anniversary, delegates convened for the first day of the 34th Meeting of the Parties (MOP 34). Parties will meet in a preparatory session Monday-Wednesday and a high-level segment will convene on Thursday and Friday.

Opening of the Preparatory Session

Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) Co-Chairs Martin Sirois (Canada) and Osvaldo Álvarez-Pérez (Chile) opened the preparatory session. Highlighting that 2022 marks the 35th anniversary of the Montreal Protocol and the 50th anniversary of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, Megumi Seki, Executive Secretary, Ozone Secretariat, welcomed participants to Montreal. She stressed that the “ozone family” can contribute to global environmental governance by distilling and analyzing lessons to provide targeted information on global issues, and noted that the Secretariat is supporting the ongoing process to establish a science-policy panel for the sound management of chemicals and waste and prevention of pollution.

Organizational Matters

Adoption of the Agenda of the Preparatory Segment: Co-Chair Álvarez-Pérez introduced the proposed agenda (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/1). ARMENIA proposed, and delegates agreed, to add an item on the distribution of seats in the Executive Committee (ExCom). Parties adopted the agenda as amended.

Organization of Work: Co-Chair Sirois outlined, and delegates adopted, the proposed organization of work for the preparatory segment.

Administrative Matters

Budget of the Trust Fund for the Montreal Protocol and Financial Reports: Co-Chair Sirois introduced this item (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/2; 34/4; 34/INF/1; 34/INF/2; 34/5). He proposed, and parties agreed, to establish a budget committee chaired by Nicole Folliet (Canada) to review the financial reports and prepare a draft decision.

Consideration of the membership of the Montreal Protocol Bodies for 2023: Co-Chair Álvarez-Pérez introduced this agenda item (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/2; 34/3), urging regional consultations and submission of nominations to the Implementation Committee, to the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund (MLF), and for the Co-Chairs of the OEWG for 2023.

Terms of Reference for the Study on the MLF Replenishment for the Triennium 2024-2026

Co-Chair Sirois introduced this item (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/2; WG.1/44/4), proposing that the contact group established at OEWG 44, chaired by Samuel Paré (Burkina Faso) and Cindy Newberg (US), be reestablished and use the draft text forwarded from OEWG 44 as a starting point. Parties agreed.

Energy Efficiency

Response to the TEAP report on decision XXXIII/5 on the Continued Provision of Information on Energy-Efficient and Low-Global-Warming-Potential Technologies: Co-Chair Álvarez-Pérez introduced the item (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/2; WG.1/44/4; Report of the TEAP, May 2022, Volume 3: Decision XXXIII/5), noting the contact group at OEWG 44 developed a list of feedback and ideas in response to the report by the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel (TEAP) (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/2, Annex II).

The US, on behalf of NORWAY, CANADA, and the UK, introduced a conference room paper (CRP) (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/CRP.4) which, among other things: requests specific information and updates from the TEAP in its 2023 progress report and quadrennial assessment reports; requests a Secretariat report on existing policies; and encourages parties to take domestic action.

ARGENTINA, supported by INDIA, BRAZIL, KUWAIT, and SAUDI ARABIA, noted with great concern that many subjects on the feedback and ideas list go “well beyond” the scope of the Montreal Protocol. INDIA called for focused guidance to the TEAP.

BRAZIL emphasized that any obligation regarding energy efficiency would need to be coupled with means of implementation for Article 5 countries. KUWAIT underscored that energy efficiency is not a compliance issue under the Montreal Protocol.

CHINA supported incorporating the issue of energy efficiency in TEAP reports but cautioned that this should be done within the framework of the Montreal Protocol.

In response to Argentina, CANADA noted the extensive list was a result of brainstorming and said the proposed CRP will help focus discussions.

BURKINA FASO stressed the importance of accounting for co-benefits from implementing the Kigali Amendment. The EU underscored the importance of transitioning to future-proof, as well as energy-efficient, technologies. Acknowledging the importance of essential cooling, NIGERIA stressed the need to ensure that local industry can compete with imported equipment.

GRENADA stressed that, while her country supports undertaking work on energy efficiency that extends beyond the core scope of the Protocol, countries should receive a corresponding level of support for that work. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO noted ongoing issues in obtaining electrical technology compatible with 60 Hz cycles in its refrigeration and air conditioning industry.

FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA introduced a CRP it plans to submit, explaining it includes a request to the TEAP for regular reporting and asks for further support of knowledge-building.

Many parties supported discussing energy efficiency issues in a contact group.

Parties agreed to reestablish OEWG 44’s contact group on energy efficiency, tasking it with discussing submitted CRPs and providing feedback on the ideas put forward in plenary.

The group is co-chaired by Annie Gabriel (Australia) and Bitul Zulhasni (Indonesia).

Dumping of New and Old Inefficient Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Appliances: Co-Chair Álvarez-Pérez introduced this item (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/2; WG.1/44/4), explaining that the draft decision had been updated following discussions at OEWG 44. GHANA, on behalf of the African States, introduced the revised proposal (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/CRP.2), stressing that policies to curb dumping are not interchangeable with institutional strengthening to respond to dumping, emphasizing that neither is adequate alone. He proposed continuing discussions in a contact group. Parties agreed to establish a contact group with logistics and co-chairs to be confirmed.

Identification of Gaps in the Global Coverage of Atmospheric Monitoring of Controlled Substances and Options for Enhancing Such Monitoring

Co-Chair Sirois introduced this item (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/2; 34/2/Add.1; WG.1/44/4), noting the EU had presented a draft decision on identifying sources of emissions originating from industrial processes, but that the contact group did not have time to discuss it at OEWG 44. He suggested, and parties agreed, to reestablish the contact group co-chaired by Michel Gauvin (Canada) and Liana Ghahramanyan (Armenia) to pursue discussions on the EU proposal. The US raised its continued concern with gaps in the global monitoring of controlled substances and, with INDIA, encouraged inclusion of this issue at Montreal Protocol meetings in 2023.

Institutional Processes to Strengthen the Effective Implementation and Enforcement of the Montreal Protocol

Co-Chair Sirois opened this item (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/2; 34/8; WG.1/44/4), saying an informal group at OEWG 44 had produced an unprioritized list of ideas for further discussion at MOP 34.

AUSTRALIA, on behalf of NORWAY, the UK, and the US, introduced a draft decision (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/CRP.7), outlining its two approaches: urging or encouraging parties to take certain actions that are consistent with previous decisions on chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), but apply those to hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs); and also re-visiting the issue next year, including through a workshop. INDIA highlighted that impacts on Article 5 countries need to be better understood.

The US, on behalf of AUSTRALIA and the UK, introduced a draft decision (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/CRP.5) requesting the TEAP to provide additional information on HFC-23 by-product emissions and prepare a report ahead of MOP 35. CANADA welcomed both CRPs and suggested CRP.5 provide more guidance to the Secretariat, such as including recommendations or identification of gaps.

Parties agreed to take up these two CRPs in a contact group co-chaired by Andrew Clark (US) and Miruza Mohamed (Maldives).

Ongoing Emissions of Carbon Tetrachloride

Co-Chair Sirois noted that the issue will be taken up in the contact group on gaps in atmospheric monitoring.

Future Availability of Halons and their Alternatives

Co-Chair Sirois introduced this item, noting the May 2022 TEAP report on halon availability. The US said the report would be helpful in guiding domestic action to manage halon stocks. Consideration of the item was closed.

Issues Related to Exemptions under Articles 2A—2I of the Montreal Protocol

Nominations for Critical-Use Exemptions for Methyl Bromide for 2023 and 2024: Marta Pizano and Ian Porter, Co-Chairs of the Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee (MBTOC), presented the Committee's recommendations (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/2/Add.1). Pizano and Porter reported critical-use nominations had been submitted by South Africa, Canada, and

Australia, noting that the MBTOC recommendations was, in each case, for a smaller amount than requested in the nomination

AUSTRALIA and CANADA expressed disappointment with MBTOC's final recommendations regarding their respective nominations. The US said it is crucial for MBTOC to follow agreed procedures and fully take into account information submitted to it.

Co-Chair Álvarez-Pérez confirmed that a CRP, to be prepared by Australia, with Canada and South Africa, would be taken up by plenary.

Stocks and Quarantine and Pre-Shipment Uses of Methyl Bromide: Co-Chair Álvarez-Pérez introduced a revised draft decision (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/2) forwarded by OEWG 44 and arising from informal consultations led by the EU. After a brief discussion, delegates agreed to establish a contact group on the issue, co-chaired by Alain Wilmart (Belgium) and Diego Montes Ferro (Colombia).

Strengthening the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel and its Technical Options Committees for the Phase-Down of HFCs and Other Future Challenges Related to the Montreal Protocol and the Climate

Co-Chair Sirois introduced this item (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/2; 34/2/Add.1; Report of the TEAP, May 2022, Volume 1: Progress Report). AUSTRALIA, supported by the US, the EU, and CANADA, requested a contact group at which the TEAP Co-Chairs could answer parties' questions. Parties reestablished the OEWG 44 contact group, to be co-chaired by Paul Kajnik (Austria) and María del Mar Solano (Costa Rica).

Consideration of Nominations by Parties of Experts to the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel

Co-Chair Álvarez-Pérez noted a total of seven nominations for this item (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/2; 34/2/Add.1) and said they would be discussed in an informal group. Several parties expressed interest in participating.

Compliance and Data Reporting Issues: The Work and Recommendations of the Implementation Committee under the Non-Compliance Procedure for the Montreal Protocol

Gene Smilansky, US, Vice-President of the Implementation Committee, reported the 68th and 69th meetings had adopted 13 formal recommendations, including three draft decisions for consideration by the MOP (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/CRP.3). These address: data and information provided by parties; establishment of licensing systems of HFCs; and a request from Madagascar to revise its baseline data. The CRP will be forwarded to the high-level segment.

In the Corridors

Not even a Co-Chair's joke about Montreal's reputation for sudden snowstorms could dull participants' enthusiasm as they gathered for the first in-person MOP since 2019: "It's just not the same to be online," one participant said. "It's good to see each other and get things done."

As the Montreal Protocol marks its 35th anniversary, parties have much to celebrate. The Protocol is successfully reversing ozone layer depletion and is a paradigm of multilateral environmental governance. Still, much work remains, from continuing to prevent ozone depletion to strengthening links to the climate community. Others pointed to the need for generational renewal, worrying about the relative lack of young people in the venue, especially compared to climate or biodiversity processes. Some saw promise in the fact that an eighteen-year-old is among the 58 chapter authors who contributed to the book marking the Protocol's 35th Anniversary, released at a festive lunch-time side event. "The curve in reductions has been steep, but we can't let the momentum drop," said one delegate, "and youth have to be part of that."