



MOP-25 HIGHLIGHTS: MONDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2013

The twenty-fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol (MOP25) opened on Monday, 21 October 2013, in Bangkok, Thailand.

In the morning, delegates heard opening statements, adopted the agenda, agreed on the organization of work and addressed administrative matters. Other topics discussed included nominations for essential-use exemptions (EUEs) and critical-use exemptions (CUEs) for 2014 and 2015 and the handbook on CUNs for methyl bromide.

In the afternoon, delegates discussed uses of controlled substances as process agents, the final report of the TEAP on additional information on ODS, organizational issues related to the TEAP and issues related to funding.

OPENING OF THE PREPARATORY SEGMENT

Chumpon Cheewaprapanunt, Deputy Director-General, Ministry of Industrial Works, Thailand, welcomed parties to the meeting and emphasized the importance of striking a balance between protecting the environment and meeting the needs of the developing world. He said that additional efforts should be made to fully implement decision XIX/6 (selection of alternatives to HCFCs). On the MLF, he urged parties to fund energy efficiency projects under the 2015-2017 replenishment to maximize climate benefits.

Marco González, Executive Secretary, Ozone Secretariat, lauded the international community for creating an instrument that “works,” reaches its goals and targets, and has a high level of compliance. He said that 183 parties have submitted data and are in full compliance of the obligations of the Protocol. He noted that the Ozone Secretariat hoped for full ratification of all amendments in 2013 but five parties have yet to ratify all the amendments. Outlining topics for discussion during the week, he noted that recent statements by the G20 and others provide a solid political setting within which the discussion on the phase-down of HFCs can take place.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Preparatory Segment Co-Chair Patrick McInerney (Australia) introduced the provisional agenda (UNEP/OzL.Pro.25/1). GRENADA asked that the item on staffing issues at the Ozone Secretariat be included under other matters.

INDIA, supported by SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, CUBA and LIBYA, called for the agenda item on proposed amendments to the Protocol to be removed and noted that, as HFCs do not fall under the purview of the Montreal Protocol, it is not the correct forum for such a discussion.

The US, with MEXICO, the EU, BURKINA FASO, CANADA, CAMEROON, NIGERIA, TOGO, MOROCCO, KENYA and MOZAMBIQUE, said the proposal has been submitted in good faith and should therefore be discussed. The US expressed frustration that a decision to establish a contact group to discuss the issue has yet to be taken.

Delegates adopted the agenda with Grenada’s proposal.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

CONSIDERATION OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL BODIES FOR 2014: Preparatory Segment Co-Chair Javier Camargo (Colombia) introduced the item, requesting that parties finalize their nominations for the Montreal Protocol Bureau for 2014 by Wednesday, 23 October.

FINANCIAL REPORTS OF THE TRUST FUNDS AND BUDGETS FOR THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL: Co-Chair McInerney introduced this item (UNEP/OzL.Pro.25/4 and Add.1). A budget committee chaired by Fiona Walters (UK) and Tumau Faasoina (Samoa) was established to consider this item.

ISSUES RELATED TO EXEMPTIONS FROM ARTICLES 2A–2I OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL

EUE NOMINATIONS FOR 2014 AND 2015: Co-Chair Camargo introduced this item, noting the Russian Federation’s nomination of 85 tons of CFC-113 for aerospace uses. On the nomination of 212 tons of CFCs for the manufacture of MDIs, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION expressed their gratitude to the TEAP for recommending that parties approve their nomination.

The TEAP presented a review of additional information on the essential use of CFCs for MDIs by the Russian Federation. Co-Chair Camargo recommended forwarding the draft decision to the High Level Segment (HLS) for further consideration.

On their nomination of 235.05 tons of CFCs for the manufacture of MDIs, CHINA highlighted the need to ensure the supply of medicine and expressed their willingness to take part in discussions on the issue. A contact group was established to further discuss the matter.

CUE NOMINATIONS FOR 2014 AND 2015: Co-Chair Carmargo introduced the item on nominations for CUEs for 2014-2015, inviting the Methyl Bromide Technical Operations Committee (MBTOC) to present their final recommendations.

The MBTOC detailed progress made on phasing out methyl bromide, stating that global consumption has fallen from 64,428 tons in 1991 to 5,187 tons in 2011. She discussed CUEs in strawberry runners, strawberry fruit and dry-cured pork sectors, and reported on the emergency use of methyl bromide at facilities in Canada to control phosphine-resistant pests. She noted that 43 parties reported QPS consumption of 8,600 metric tons of methyl bromide for 2012.



JORDAN said that the Protocol should explore methods to control methyl bromide in QPS uses. AUSTRALIA said that MBTOC recommendations for its CUEs fall short of its requirements, saying that they are considering alternate chemical usage but that in the interim, the full methyl bromide quantity is needed. He noted that they will submit a draft decision to this effect.

CANADA said they would co-sponsor the draft decision, noting significant regulatory and economic barriers to implementing suitable alternatives. He expressed concern that alternative chemicals may have deleterious effects, such as contaminating groundwater.

The US highlighted its intention to phase out methyl bromide use by 2017, but said that in the interim, methyl bromide is still needed. He also expressed concern that the MBTOC provided a recommendation for methyl bromide stock levels in 2016, when it was not requested.

KENYA said that it may seek a CUE for methyl bromide in the future, as there is some resistance to phosphine in the grain industry. SWITZERLAND said that, if Australia were to consider a date for methyl bromide phase out, it would enable parties to look at the CUE figures for 2013 more favorably.

A contact group was established to discuss the matter.

HANDBOOK ON CRITICAL-USE NOMINATIONS FOR METHYL BROMIDE: Co-Chair Camargo opened the floor for discussion on how to finalize the handbook. The EU requested time to ensure that the handbook is correct and questioned whether a formal decision on its finalization is required. The US observed that some issues highlighted during MOP24 and OEWS33 have not been addressed, including the MBTOC's interpretation of economic guidelines. Informal discussions will take place to resolve the matter.

USES OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES AS PROCESS AGENTS: Co-Chair Camargo introduced the agenda item, saying that at OEWS33, parties requested the TEAP to clarify whether carbon tetrachloride is used in the manufacture of vinyl chloride monomer. Ian Rae, Chemicals Technical Options Committee, said that it is not used in vinyl chloride monomer production in North America, but is rather a by-product of the manufacturing process. Upon a request from India for further clarification, Rae said that it is possible for it to be used as a feedstock, should the manufacturer choose to do so.

FINAL REPORT BY THE TEAP ON ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON ALTERNATIVES TO ODS

Co-Chair McInerney, introducing the item, said that a task force had been established at OEWS33 to finalize the report.

The TEAP said the task force had restructured the report to, *inter alia*, be forward looking, address barriers to progress and highlight specific regional issues. On refrigeration and air conditioning, he said that a number of refrigerants have been assessed, underscoring that the report analyzes current refrigerant usage in addition to articulating overarching issues such as training and standards. He also noted that constraints for penetration rates of refrigerants have been set out, saying these are considered despite complex system issues.

The TEAP asserted that the transition to hydrofluoroolefins (HFOs) is conditional on ongoing steps, including chemical registration. On foam opportunities, he added that HFOs are showing significant benefits in thermal conductivity and that methyl formate is being used in niche areas such as vending machines. He added that technical and economic criteria remain challenging. The TEAP also discussed limitations of solvent alternatives to ODS including low water-tolerance and extreme flammability and toxicity.

INDIA asked for clarification on the percentage of HCFCs being replaced by "so-called" high global warming potential (GWP) alternatives. The US requested a regional breakdown

of the penetration rates of HCFC alternatives. The EU noted that efficiency gains through natural refrigerants are not always reflected in the TEAP report. CANADA emphasized the potential reduction in CO₂-equivalent emissions by 2020 through a switch to low GWP alternatives. IRAQ, with CANADA, stressed that there are few alternatives to ODS in countries with high ambient temperatures.

The TEAP said that supermarket chains are relevant opportunities for greening investments, as there are significant opportunities for applying the use of CO₂ in commercial refrigeration. CHINA inquired about issues including: the impact of refrigerant blends on the performance of products and processes; the impact of incremental costs of alternatives and market acceptance; and whether TEAP, in its analysis of obstacles, differentiated between developing and developed countries.

ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES RELATED TO THE TEAP

Co-Chair McInerney introduced this agenda item.

Operation and organization of the Panel: AUSTRALIA noted that the draft decision was negotiated during OEWS33 and could be forwarded to the HLS.

Status of membership of the Panel and its technical options committees: The US requested additional time to examine the draft decision.

ISSUES RELATED TO FUNDING

Co-Chair Chair McInerney introduced this agenda item.

Additional funding for the MLF for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol to maximize the climate benefit of the accelerated phase-out of HCFCs: CHINA, with NORWAY, welcomed the proposal on voluntary contributions under the MLF. CHINA further cautioned that any funding would need to be managed in an integrated manner.

ARGENTINA, supported by URUGUAY, CHINA, CUBA, and INDIA, stated that the MLF is a great success and that duplication of work should be avoided. The EU noted its commitment to ensuring assistance for Article 5 countries. The US called for creating a contact group.

SWITZERLAND clarified that the proposal does not put any MLF provisions at risk but rather aims to expand the MLF's scope.

Co-Chair McInerney urged parties to undertake informal discussions to reach consensus.

OTHER MATTERS

The EU, on behalf of Croatia, said, following Croatia's accession to the EU, it requests that it be reclassified as an Article 2 country.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Getting swiftly down to work on day one, many delegates welcomed the opportunity to advance concrete outcomes toward ozone layer protection. Some delegates highlighted the effectiveness of the Protocol, arguing that this is the forum "where things really happen." Behind such optimism, however, was a fundamental concern about the proposed amendment regarding the phase down of HFCs, which has been under debate for the last five years. The proposed amendment and its linkages between the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Montreal Protocol are also purportedly responsible for bringing "newcomers" to the ozone family, with some attendees confessing that this is their first Montreal Protocol negotiation.

In the corridors though, several veterans voiced what many already knew, that it is unrealistic to expect a formal decision on HFCs at MOP25, where the intention is rather to launch further work on potential alternatives to HFCs. Sending a "strong signal" to the upcoming Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC was also mooted as a potentially satisfactory outcome from MOP25.