



Policy is the key!

Thematic Meeting of South Asia Network Ozone Officers, Customs Officers and Partners



Bangkok, 20 December 2014 - National Ozone Officers (NOOs) and Customs Officers gathered for the “**Thematic Meeting of the South Asia Network of Ozone Officers**”. This meeting was organized by UNEP ROAP OzonAction at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok, Thailand, from 17-19 December 2014.

Apart from the South Asia NOOs as the key participants, representatives from Customs Administration or ministries (e.g. Ministry of Commerce) that are implementing national ODS licensing/ quota systems were also invited and participated in the discussions. Among the agencies that took part in the meeting in presence or via virtual platforms were: the European Commission, the Multilateral Fund Secretariat, UNDP, UNIDO, World Bank, World Customs Organisation’s Regional Office for Capacity Building – Asia Pacific (WCO ROCB A/P), and Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA).

The meeting focused on policy and enforcement as the key tools for achieving HCFC phase-out. For the first time during the HCFC phase-out, both ozone and customs officers of South Asia countries came together to strengthen their cooperation to remain in compliance with the control measures under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. This multilateral environmental agreement includes time-bound and measurable deadlines to phase-out ozone depleting substances (ODS).

The main objective was to carry out an in-depth, trans-boundary analysis of the control policies and enforcement issues for HCFCs as identified by the South Asian ozone officers at the last Regional Network meeting in Colombo in May 2014. The meeting also generated a set of concrete actions to be implemented in 2015 by each participating country based on the discussions and information exchanged.

During the three-day meeting, some key policy issues were discussed such as enforcing quota systems for HCFC control, trans-boundary dialogues, combatting ODS smuggling, trade data and reporting of imports and exports. For those who were less familiar with the Montreal Protocol, some sessions were



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offered to inform them of current issues concerning its enforcement. The agenda also covered updates on the key decisions from the last Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol and the Executive Committee Meeting (both held in November 2014); the reviews of the progress made within the South Asia Network, as well as the work plan for 2015.

The meeting resulted in customs officers agreeing to have an informal network amongst them for more effective cross-border enforcement. The meeting also provided an opportunity to explore new partnership with the International Network of Customs Universities (INCU), International Labour Organization (ILO) and World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). These partnerships are hoped to assist countries in strengthen their capability to meet the Montreal Protocol obligations.

Managed by UNEP's OzonAction Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP), The South Asia Network includes 13 countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Iran, Democratic Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Japan is the developed country partner of the network. The network receives financial support from the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

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