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Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

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Highlights

The Seventeenth Joint Network Meeting of Ozone Officers from the English- and French-speaking African countries addresses safe, Climate-friendly and energy-efficient alternatives to HCFC



Addis Ababa, 28 March 2014 - Ahead of the 1 January 2015 target to meet the ten percent step down from the freeze level of Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFC) phase-out set by the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, forty-seven African countries met from 24-28 March, 2014 in Addis Ababa to exchange experiences and address common issues with HCFC and methyl bromide (MB) phase-out. The main challenge for the African Ozone Officers is the need to speed up the implementation of activities identified in the HCFC Phase-Out Management Plan (HPMP) in order to meet the ten per cent reduction in the baseline consumption for the next eight months. These goals need to be achieved against sharp growing demands for refrigeration and air-conditioning equipment that rely on HCFC technologies or technologies that potentially have major negative impacts on the environment, and particularly the climate.

The meeting was opened by the Hon. Belete Tafere Desta, Minister, Ministry of Environment and Forest of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. In his statement, the Minister noted that many studies and researches done on climate change such as IPCC AR4 and IPCC AR5 indicated that the globe was getting warmer at an alarming rate due to the continuing emission of global warming gases. He said that with good efforts in reducing the use of these gases, the challenges and problems could be solved, and for these reasons, implementation of the Montreal Protocol (MP) is important and needs to be given high attention.

The five-day session was attended by representatives from the Multilateral Fund Secretariat, Ozone Secretariat, Implementing agencies; as well as international experts, Refrigeration Industries and the private sector. Plenary and separate sessions for the two

networks were held. The objective was for ozone officers to share experiences and information to enable them to efficiently implement their national HPMPs and meet their obligations under the MP. These talks provided a platform for ozone officers to examine common problems and challenges, compare notes on measures taken in the past years, draw lessons learnt in a few specific cases which need readjustment and foster regional collaboration towards meeting the countries' binding obligations under the Protocol.

The meeting took place against the backdrop of many African countries facing big challenges in the implementation of their national HPMPs due to a growing demand for the introduction and implementation of regulatory mechanisms for energy-efficient, safe and low-Global Warming Potential (GWP) refrigerants. Such challenges made it necessary for African ozone officers to think and act in a comprehensive and holistic manner, in order to advise the governments on the appropriate technology choices.

For Further Information:

Mr. Patrick Salifu, Regional Network Coordinator, Anglophone Network
Tel: +254207623956: Email: Patrick.Salifu@unep.org

Mr. Yamar Guisse, Regional Network Coordinator, Francophone Network
Tel: +254207623909: Email: Yamar.Guisse@unep.org
OzonAction Programme: www.unep.org/ozonaction

Note to Editors:

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the United Nations system's designated entity for addressing environmental issues at the global and regional level. Its mandate is to coordinate the development of environmental policy consensus by keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of governments and the international community for action.

Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer is an international treaty designed to protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production and consumption of a number of substances believed to be responsible for ozone depletion. The treaty was opened for signature on September 16, 1987 and entered into force on January 1, 1989. Since then, it has undergone five revisions, in 1990 (London), 1992 (Copenhagen), 1995 (Vienna), 1997 (Montreal), and 1999 (Beijing). Due to its universal adoption and continuous implementation it has been hailed as an example of exceptional international cooperation "Perhaps the single most successful international agreement to date..."

The Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol was established in 1990 to assist developing countries to comply with the control measures of the Protocol. It is managed by an Executive Committee which is responsible for overseeing the operation of the Fund. The Committee comprises seven members from developed and seven members from developing countries.