



Pacific Islands Ozone Officers Consider Next Steps for HCFC Phase-out and Initial Kigali Amendment Obligations



BANGKOK, 29 September 2018 - The first *Thematic Meeting on the Implementation of the Initial Obligations for Countries that have Ratified the Montreal Protocol's Kigali Amendment* was held on 27 September 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand as part of the Pacific Islands Countries' National Ozone Officers Network and Thematic Meeting held from 27-29 September. The Kigali Amendment will phase down hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), gases that are widely used in refrigeration and air conditioning equipment and foam manufacturing but which contribute to climate change when released to the atmosphere. To date, the Kigali Amendment has been ratified by 56 countries and it will enter into force on 1 January 2019. This meeting, which was organized by UN Environment Programme's OzonAction with support from the Protocol's Multilateral Fund, is helping developing countries prepare for their compliance obligations under this treaty.

Ten out of the 12 countries from Asia-Pacific that have already ratified the Kigali Amendment participated — the Federated States of Micronesia, Lao PDR, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Tonga and Vanuatu — along with the rest of the Pacific Island Countries who are in the process of ratifying — Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. Resource persons from the Government of Australia, the Ozone Secretariat, the Multilateral Fund Secretariat and UNDP also participated. Two regional organizations which have interlinked activities with the Montreal



Protocol in the region, i.e. the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and Oceania Customs Organization, also participated and shared their knowledge and perspectives.

Over the three days, participants shared experiences with the ratification process and reviewed the challenges Article 5 countries will face in meeting their initial obligations, including possible ways forward. The challenges include the development of licensing and quota systems for HFCs, and establishment of a data reporting system for HFCs. Participants also reviewed Compliance Assistance Services provided by OzonAction; updated the progress on implementation of Stage I of the Hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC) Phase Out Management Plans (HPMPs); explored how to assign HFC customs codes under the Pacific Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System; discussed the implementation of Enabling Activities and preparation of the regional HPMP Stage II taking into account the Kigali Amendment and the unique needs of the region.



Dr. Dechen Tsering, Regional Director and Representative for Asia and the Pacific office, UN Environment, congratulated the Pacific Island Countries for their remarkable efforts in early ratification of the Kigali Amendment and well advanced achievement in reducing HCFC consumption ahead of the Montreal Protocol schedule. As the HCFC phase-out is still underway, Dr. Tsering emphasized that, ***“It is important for Article 5 countries to continue strengthening their efforts for the HCFC phase-out while they are preparing to meet the initial***

obligations of the Kigali Amendment”. UN Environment Programme will continue to provide support to the Pacific Islands Countries to implement the Montreal Protocol, which is linked to the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and the S.A.M.O.A Pathway.

Mr. Yota Oue, the new National Ozone Officer of Micronesia, said, ***“The 2018 Pacific Island Countries Network meeting was tremendously informative for the individual Ozone Officer and helpful in strengthening the Pacific Island collective. I am better equipped with the knowledge and network capacity to carry out my duties on the national and state level. The UN Environment staff were extremely welcoming and accommodating to our questions and concerns and will continue to be one of our valuable resources.”***

Ms. Francesca Sungino, senior National Ozone Officer of Palau, added, ***“Thank you for providing one of the very informative and interesting workshop/meeting for the Pacific Island Countries. The structure***



of the meeting was informal that I think that got the National Ozone Officers to open up and interact quite actively. I hope we continue our annual network meeting in this kind of setting so that we all can be productive in our respective line of work for the same cause.”

The National Ozone Officers’ Network and Thematic Meetings for the Pacific Islands Countries, are part of the 2018 work plan of UN Environment Programme’s CAP in the Asia and the Pacific Office to support countries in implementing their Montreal Protocol commitments.

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