



Helping National Ozone Officers in the Pacific Islands Successfully Navigate through the Montreal Protocol

BANGKOK, 25 September 2018 – A key factor contributing to the remarkable success of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer to date is its country-driven nature. In the 147 developing countries that have joined this treaty, the implementation work is coordinated at the national level by dedicated “National Ozone Units” in the government, which are in turn led “Ozone Officers.” How well those officers and their teams perform – developing projects, managing national strategies, reporting



data, developing and enforcing policies, working with national and international institutions – directly or indirectly affects the status of their countries' compliance with obligations under the treaty. Because National Ozone Units exist in all developing countries, and there is a normal process of personnel turnover due to career development, there is a regular need to transfer knowledge, teach skills, and share experiences with the new arrivals. This is where UN Environment's OzonAction steps in.

As the Implementing Agency of the Protocol's Multilateral Fund with the major responsibility for capacity building, UN Environment accords the highest priority to strengthening and supporting Ozone Officers. As part of OzonAction's 2018 work plan, it brought 14 enthusiastic participants from the Pacific Island Countries – Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu – to Bangkok to participate in its newly-minted National Ozone Officer training course from 25 – 26 September 2018. This training event was the second of its kind, following the first successful one held in the Caribbean region in May 2018.

The training provides the new Ozone Officers and Assistant Ozone Officers with essential information about the Montreal Protocol, details about the role, responsibilities and expectations of Ozone Officers and their teams, the activities that a National Ozone Unit needs to undertake, and key skills required for its daily operations to efficiently support the implementation of the Montreal Protocol in their countries.

The training programme was jointly delivered by the OzonAction team from Paris and the Asia and Pacific Office. Senior government officers from the region who have been working as National Ozone Officers for over 10 years also delivered selected training sessions to share their first-hand experiences with Montreal Protocol implementation.

The new programme consists of 12 modules ranging from basic information about ozone depletion science; the Montreal Protocol and its institutional regime; the roles of National Ozone Officers; national legal frameworks and enforcement; data collections, monitoring and reporting; development and implementation of Multilateral Fund projects; raising awareness and working with stakeholders and alternative technologies and technical options. The training was conducted informally to allow participants to be at ease during interactions thus allow a better uptake of the technically-rich curriculum. Each module comprised a presentation by a resource person followed by questions and answers. Thereafter followed an inclusive interactive activity session to allow participants to get in-depth understanding of the topics and practice their newly-acquired skills.



Testing of beads that detect ultraviolet (UV) radiation under direct sunlight. This session was particularly interesting as the National Ozone Officers witnessed firsthand how the beads change from white to multiple colours indicating the presence of this radiation in the sunlight.



A crossword puzzle activity for which the National Ozone Officers were divided into two groups as a competition.

To address the challenges of the high turn-over of National Ozone Officers in the region, OzonAction's Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) uses a number of approaches including, frequent communication with and mentoring for National Ozone Officers, direct support via country missions, South-South cooperation for on-the-job training, etc., in addition to training workshops like the one held in Bangkok.



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