

Montreal Protocol and Legal Experts from Southern African Development Community countries team up for Kigali Amendment



Victoria, Mahe, Seychelles, 24 June 2019 – The historic Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer entered into force six months ago, on 1 January 2019, ushering in a new era of enhanced ozone and climate protection. For the 74 developed and developing countries that have ratified this amendment to date, it brings with it new commitments to phase down the production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), potent man-made greenhouse gases used extensively in refrigeration, air conditioning, plastic foam and other applications. Understanding how to best meet these commitments requires intensive consultations, preparations and actions by different stakeholder groups at the national level to enable the Kigali Amendment. To this end, UN Environment OzonAction in cooperation with the Seychelles Ministry of Environment, Energy, and Climate Change brought together National Ozone Officers and legal experts from 13 countries of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to Victoria, Seychelles, from 19-21 June 2019 to help the countries prepare for ratification and implementation of the Kigali Amendment.

A key challenge for developing countries is to simultaneously implement the timely phase out of remaining hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC) consumption while at the same time preparing for the phase down of HFCs. This is particularly crucial for the refrigeration and air conditioning servicing sector, which represents the majority of HCFC and HFC use in most countries that consume low volumes of those substances. Under the Kigali Amendment, all countries need to

ensure legal preparedness by adjusting laws and regulations, and adopt energy-efficient and climate-friendly technologies.

The workshop was opened by Mr. Wallace Cosgrow, the Minister of Environment, Energy and Climate Change. He highlighted the importance and timeliness of the workshop as most countries in the region are embarking on the ratification of the Kigali Amendment. After providing a brief overview of the Seychelles progress in ratifying the amendment and the country's major Montreal Protocol-related achievements, he assured participants that the ratification process would be completed in the coming weeks.

While two countries in the region have already ratified the Kigali Amendment – Malawi and Namibia – other countries were encouraged to take the necessary steps at the national level to complete the ratification process at the earliest possible time. Participants noted that beyond the process of ratification and domestication, there is need for more investments into the actual implementation of the Kigali Amendment. They also acknowledged that while consultations are important and integral to the process, there is need to ensure that these consultations are thorough, extensive and inclusive. Stakeholders must be identified and analyzed in order to ensure that information is given to them in a timely manner and that their views and feedback are included in the decision-making processes.

The meeting participants identified several important areas for attention. First, responsible departments/institutions including National Ozone Units (NOUs) must be innovative and proactive in terms of securing the support of decision-makers within their executive and legislative branches of governments. Countries are urged to be time-sensitive in resolving the holdups and challenges in the process of ratification, domestication, and implementation.

Second, countries are encouraged to introduce regulatory measures for HFCs and to review their licensing systems and to incorporate HFCs conjointly with the ratification process. The meeting urged UNEP to include the exchange of licensing/drafting experiences in the agendas of Regional Network meetings in 2020.

Lastly, countries are encouraged to carefully assess alternatives to HFCs and select suitable and long-term solutions for each sub-sector. The countries highlighted the importance of various incentives for introduction of low-global warming potential alternatives and “green” technologies to encourage the refrigeration and cooling sector to shift to sustainable alternative technologies.

The workshop, which was organized as part of OzonAction's Regional Networks of Ozone Officer for Anglophone Africa, achieved its goal of bringing together and engaging the Ozone Officers and their legal experts who are the key players in reviewing, detecting and resolving bottlenecks and challenges in the processes of ratification, domestication and implementation of the Kigali Amendment.

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