



UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

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Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

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Maldives is Walking the Talk; Deriving Climate Benefits from Ozone Layer Protection

Male, 11 June 2010- Today, President Mohamed Nasheed, the Vice President and a number of ministers from the Maldives announced an important Joint Declaration for the Implementation of the HCFC Phase out Management Plan (HPMP) during the inauguration of the High-Level Roundtable Dialogue on HPMP and its contribution on Carbon Neutrality.

HCFCs have been utilized as substitutes for chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) for use in refrigeration, including air-conditioning units, refrigerators and various types of manufacturing processes. HCFCs not only destroy the stratospheric ozone layer which is essential to life on Earth but they are also greenhouse gases. In 2007, international community took an important step for accelerated phase-out of HCFCs.

Early this year, the Maldives has made a historic decision to phase out HCFCs by 2020, in line with its carbon neutrality policy, 10 years ahead of the Montreal Protocol phase out schedule.

“The Maldives has become the first country in the world to receive the funding from the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol for the country’s HPMP. This demonstrates to the world that Small Island States can also be at the frontline in the battle against climate change and the protection of the ozone layer” said Ms. Maria Nolan, Chief Officer of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

The Maldives has committed to phase out the consumption of HCFCs, mainly used in the air conditioning in its nearly 100 tourist resorts spread in its more than 1200 islands.

In this process, relevant Ministries in the country, including the Ministry of Trade, Customs, Tourism, Attorney General and Fisheries, as well as various national stakeholders have agreed to commit and collaborate in the implementation of the plan.

“We believe that going green isn’t just ecologically sound but also economically beneficial. The Maldives is famed for its luxury resorts, whose refrigeration systems are the source of most of the country’s HCFC emissions. Moving early to phase out the use of HCFCs over the next decade, not only helps protect the beautiful tropical environment tourists come to see but also positions Maldives as a strong eco-destination” said President Nasheed.

Yesterday, high-level officials from the Maldives and the United Nations, along with high commissioners from India and various national stakeholders discussed about the mechanism and the way forward in expediting the implementation of the HCFC phase out plan.

“This dialogue gave us the opportunity to brainstorm about the implementation mechanism, including the policy and legislations, private sector’s involvement, energy efficiency benefit, as well as how to put HCFC phase-out at an appropriate place in the Carbon neutrality policy of the Maldives” said Mr. Javier Camago, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund.

The Maldives’ HPMP is the world’s first national phase out plan which specifically targets this group of chemicals. With its overarching structure, it covers different sectors and stakeholders in the country, including the media. As part of the plan, the Maldives also organized a media workshop to raise media’s awareness on HCFC phase out issues on 9 June 2010.

“The Montreal Protocol’s success has shown that we now know that together we can address climate challenges through technology support and capacity building efforts. What we need now is leadership to get further climate benefits from the ozone layer protection. I am pleased that Maldives is demonstrating that leadership role” said Mr. Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UNEP.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

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

The 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 widespread adoption and implementation it has been hailed as an example of exceptional international cooperation "Perhaps the single most successful international agreement to date..."

About the Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) of UNEP DTIE

UNEP as an Implementing Agency of the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol has a unique regionalized programme that delivers compliance assistance services to countries to assist them meet the international commitments under the Protocol. The compliance regime requires countries to: achieve and sustain compliance, promote a greater sense of country ownership and implement the agreed Executive Committee framework for strategic planning.

UNEP through the Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) has moved from project management approach to a direct implementation initiative through its specialized staff. Consistent with the above approach the Regional Office for Asia and Pacific (ROAP) CAP team has developed to be the centre for policy advice, compliance guidance and conduct training to refrigeration technicians, customs officers and other relevant stakeholders on compliance issues, promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation and promote high-level awareness by utilizing UNEP’s staff.

OzonAction Programme: www.unep.fr/ozonaction

Multilateral Fund: www.multilateral.fund.org

Ozone Secretariat: www.ozone.unep.org