Open-ended Working Group of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer
Thirty-ninth meeting
Bangkok, 11–14 July 2017

Issues that the Secretariat would like to bring to the attention of the parties

Note by the Secretariat

1. The present note briefly summarizes issues of relevance to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the work of the Secretariat that the Secretariat wishes to bring to the attention of the parties.

I. Tenth meeting of the Ozone Research Managers and associated meetings

2. The Secretariat and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) co-organized the tenth meeting of the Ozone Research Managers at WMO headquarters in Geneva from 28 to 30 March 2017.

3. The meeting was attended by more than 100 participants, including national ozone research managers and experts of international programmes in the field of atmospheric observations and research.

4. The participants discussed wider interactions between stratospheric ozone, weather and climate. The meeting placed a spotlight on the interconnection between ozone and climate and emphasized the need for increased research and observation to support efforts to protect the ozone layer.1

5. The participants made various recommendations related to research needs, systematic observation, data archiving, stewardship and capacity-building. Those recommendations will be submitted to the joint eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, to be held in Montreal, Canada, from 20 to 24 November 2017.

6. In addition, the Secretariat organized the first meeting of the Bureau of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention on 30 March 2017 and the third meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Vienna Convention Trust Fund at WMO headquarters on 27 March 2017.

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1 Presentations made at the meeting are available from the meeting portal at the following link: http://conf.montreal-protocol.org/meeting/orm/10orm/presentations/SitePages/Home.aspx.
II. Activities to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Montreal Protocol

A. Communication campaign

7. The year 2017 marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Montreal Protocol. The theme for the anniversary and the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer, to be marked on 16 September, is “Caring for all life under the sun”. The theme celebrates the critical role played by the Montreal Protocol in caring for life on the planet over the past 30 years. It is complemented by a logo that illustrates the Montreal Protocol’s singular goal to protect all life on Earth.

8. The logo and theme in the six official languages of the United Nations are posted on the Secretariat website (http://ozone.unep.org/en/information-material) for wider dissemination, together with guidelines on their usage. Additional information products will be available on the website in the coming weeks and months for parties to download and use in their commemorative activities.

9. To mark this important milestone, the Ozone Secretariat is undertaking an awareness campaign to celebrate the major accomplishments of the Montreal Protocol in protecting the ozone layer and the climate, to increase public recognition of the success and impact of the Protocol, and to generate further support for the Protocol and its new mandate to phase down climate-warming hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) under the Kigali Amendment, adopted in 2016.

10. Under the campaign, the Secretariat will, together with the parties, conduct a variety of outreach activities that will include the dissemination of communication materials through the Secretariat website, digital and social media channels of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other outlets.

11. Further information on how the parties can participate in the campaign will be provided in the coming weeks and months.

12. Once again, the Secretariat will provide limited financial assistance to four developing countries as a contribution towards the cost of organizing their national activities to commemorate International Ozone Day 2017.

B. Ozone Awards 2017

13. In celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Montreal Protocol, the Secretariat, in cooperation with the Government of Canada, will host the 2017 Ozone Awards at the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Parties in Montreal, Canada, on 23 November 2017.

14. The awards will recognize the achievements of individuals, groups and organizations that have demonstrated extraordinary commitment and made a significant contribution to the progress and achievements of the Montreal Protocol, primarily in the past 10 years.

15. The Secretariat is calling for nominations for the awards from individuals, Governments and implementing partners, including the United Nations and international bodies, non-governmental organizations, industry and industry associations.


17. The Ozone Secretariat, the Secretariat of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol and individuals working for the secretariats are not eligible for nomination and will not be part of the selection process.

C. Upgrading of the Secretariat website

18. As part of the thirtieth anniversary celebrations, the Secretariat is upgrading its website to strengthen its digital presence, better serve the parties and other stakeholders, and enhance communication with its audiences.

19. The initiative includes an upgrade of the website’s navigation structure and information architecture with a view to improving usability, a user-centred redesign of the website to modernize its look, and the implementation of a coherent content strategy to inform, educate, inspire and engage audiences.

20. As part of the initiative, the Secretariat has worked with a number of stakeholders, who have provided useful insights on the features and tools that are being upgraded on the website.
The upgraded website is scheduled to be launched in the third quarter of 2017.

III. Activities related to the Sustainable Development Goals

A. Environment Management Group

The Environment Management Group was established in 2001 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 53/242 for the purpose of enhancing inter-agency coordination in the field of environment and human settlements. Part of its mandate is to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by enhancing United Nations system-wide collaboration and coherent responses on environmental matters.2

Membership of the group comprises the specialized agencies, programmes and organs of the United Nations, including the secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements. It is chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP and supported by a secretariat provided by UNEP.

The Secretariat became a full member of the group in April 2017, in recognition of its value in building synergies across related organizations, allowing members to respond collectively to global environmental challenges including those addressed by the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol.

The Secretariat will participate in the regular technical and high-level meetings of the group, which are usually held by video conference. The Secretariat has also provided input from the perspective of the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol to the group’s system-wide framework of strategies on the environment for 2017 and looks forward to participating in its nexus approach to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

B. High-level political forum on sustainable development

The high-level political forum on sustainable development is the United Nations central platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.3 The forum, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, meets annually to review in-depth progress made towards the achievement of specific sustainable development goals.

The 2017 meeting, which will be held in New York from 10 to 19 July 2017, will take as its theme “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world” and will focus on goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14 and 17.4

In response to an invitation from the President of the Economic and Social Council, the President of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the President of the Twenty-Eighth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol submitted a joint report to the high-level political forum on 7 April 2017. The report highlights the contribution made by the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol towards the Sustainable Development Goals that are under in-depth review in 2017 and are most relevant to the work of the two instruments.

IV. World Customs Organization activities on custom codes for HFCs

In its decision XXVI/8, the Meeting of the Parties had, inter alia, requested the Secretariat to liaise with the World Customs Organization (WCO) to examine the possibility of designating individual customs codes under the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System for the most commonly traded fluorinated substitutes for hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

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2 See http://unemg.org/.
3 See https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf.
4 Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.
30. After the Secretariat had conveyed decision XXVI/8 to WCO in 2015, the organization agreed to embark upon the process of designating individual Harmonized System (HS) codes for the most commonly traded HFCs, which are currently controlled under the Montreal Protocol following the adoption of the Kigali Amendment to the Protocol in October 2016. The Secretariat has been following the matter closely, including providing clarification during the meetings of the WCO Scientific Subcommittee and Harmonised System Review Subcommittee that have taken place since 2015. The matter has been placed on the agenda of WCO meetings again in 2017 with a view to recommending to the Harmonized System Committee the assignment of HS codes to the most commonly traded HFCs, for subsequent approval by the WCO Council.

V. Other Secretariat activities

A. Primer on meetings

31. To assist the parties, and in particular new representatives of the parties, in their participation in meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the Meetings of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, the Secretariat has prepared a primer on meetings to serve as a handy reference document.

32. The primer provides an introduction to the various entities and institutions of the two instruments, paying particular attention to the role and functions of the Meeting of the Parties and the Open-ended Working Group.


B. Carbon offsetting for 2016

34. The Secretariat continues to work towards maintaining climate neutrality and has, for the third year running, measured the carbon footprint of all the meetings held and operations conducted under the Montreal Protocol in 2016 and is in the process of offsetting the greenhouse gas emissions created thereby.

35. The Secretariat has worked in collaboration with the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to determine its carbon footprint, which is equivalent to 2,298 tons of carbon dioxide.

36. To ensure that all meetings and operations conducted in 2016 are climate-neutral, the Secretariat will offset its entire carbon footprint by purchasing, through the Framework Convention on Climate Change, certified emission reductions from the Adaptation Fund, which finances projects and programmes to help developing countries to adapt to the negative effects of climate change. The certified emission reductions will be purchased later this year, once the Convention has collected sufficient requests from the United Nations community to purchase the certified emissions reductions in bulk.

C. Media outreach for the Kigali Amendment

37. In the run-up to and following the adoption of the Kigali Amendment on 15 October 2016, the Secretariat conducted communication outreach that resulted in extensive coverage of the Amendment by global media outlets.

38. Global media published some 13,770 articles about the Kigali Amendment in October 2016, with over 6,000 articles published on 15 October alone. Close to 5,000 leading media outlets in 149 countries reported on the Amendment in at least 36 languages. In addition, related messages reached at least 831,398 people on social media channels.

VI. Secretariat missions in 2017

A. Seventy-eighth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol

39. Between November 2016 and May 2017 the Secretariat undertook a number of missions in furtherance of the goals of the Montreal Protocol as follows:

40. The Secretariat participated in the seventy-eighth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, held in Montreal, Canada, from
4 to 7 April 2017. The meeting was convened to address policy matters related to the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol. The Executive Secretary then visited the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Boulder, Colorado, United States of America, on 10 and 11 April 2017, where she held meetings with scientists and participated in a discussion on the relationship between science, policy and diplomacy.

B. Seventy-seventh meeting of the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol

41. The Secretariat participated in the seventy-seventh meeting of the Executive Committee, held in Montreal, Canada, from 28 November to 2 December 2016. The issues discussed included regular Executive Committee agenda items, including the status of contributions and disbursement, resources and planning, progress in the implementation of the 2016–2018 business plans, approval of the 2017–2019 business plans, review and approval of project proposals and financial issues, including the 2015 accounts. The meeting also considered matters arising from the Twenty-Eighth Meeting of the Parties, held in Kigali from 10 to 14 October 2016, at which the parties adopted the Kigali Amendment and the related decision XXVIII/2.

42. The meeting agreed to hold a special meeting in April 2017 to discuss the way forward for the Multilateral Fund with regard to decision XXVIII/2, as well as the additional amount of $27 million to be provided by donor countries to assist those developing countries that choose to accelerate the phase-down of HFCs.

C. Inter-agency coordination meeting and exploratory mission for the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol

43. The Secretariat participated in the inter-agency coordination meeting held in Montreal, Canada, from 21 to 23 February 2017. The Secretariat held bilateral meetings with the implementing agencies on issues related to the Kigali Amendment and with the secretariat of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol on the new data reporting forms to accompany the implementation of the Amendment on the phase-down of HFCs.

44. The Secretariat also visited the headquarters of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), where the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol and the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention will take place from 20 to 24 November 2017, and held meetings with officials from ICAO and the Government of Canada.

D. Fifty-second meeting of the Council of the Global Environment Facility

45. The Secretariat attended the fifty-second meeting of the Council of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) at the invitation of the GEF secretariat to brief Council members on the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol. The GEF member countries, which are referred to as participants, include developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition. They are represented on the Council by 32 constituencies (14 for developed countries, 16 for developing countries and 2 for countries with economies in transition), each one comprising a Council member and an alternate. The meeting was held in Washington, D.C. from 23 to 25 May 2017, although the Secretariat only participated in the last two days of the meeting.

46. Under agenda item 10 (Relations with the Conventions and Other International Institutions), which included discussions between Council members and representatives of multilateral environmental agreements (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, Minamata Convention on Mercury, Convention on Biological Diversity and Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants) on the role of the conventions in delivering global environmental commons in the post-2015 era, the Secretariat briefed the Council on the progress made to date by the parties to the Montreal Protocol in phasing out ozone-depleting substances and thanked GEF for contributing to that achievement by providing funding to countries with economies in transition to phase out ozone-depleting substances. The Secretariat also updated GEF Council members on the recent development by which parties to the Montreal Protocol amended the Protocol in October 2016 to phase down the production and consumption of HFCs under the Kigali Amendment and underscored the need for GEF to continue funding countries with economies in transition to enable them to implement the Kigali Amendment once it has entered into force. GEF has been providing funding to countries with economies in transition to assist them in the phasing out of ozone-depleting substances under the Montreal Protocol since 1996.
47. Participants at the GEF meeting did not take a decision to address the issue of HFC funding for countries with economies in transition, but the matter is under discussion in the ongoing negotiations for the next replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund for the period 2018 to 2022, which will be concluded by June 2018.

E. Technology and Economic Assessment Panel meeting

48. The Secretariat participated in the meeting of the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel held in Kyoto, Japan, from 1 to 5 May 2017. The main aim of the meeting was to review and agree on the final drafts of the Panel reports due for submission to the thirty-ninth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group, as well as to plan work in the run-up to the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Parties.

F. Annual meeting of the World Meteorological Organization/Global Atmosphere Watch Scientific Advisory Group on Ozone

49. The Secretariat participated in the annual meeting of the World Meteorological Organization/Global Atmosphere Watch Scientific Advisory Group on Ozone held in Thessaloniki, Greece, from 19 to 21 April 2017. The purpose of the meeting was to review the status of research and monitoring of global ozone, ultra-violet and related substances and parameters with a view to undertaking any action necessary for the smooth operation and improvement of relevant activities. The Secretariat informed the Group of the status of the Vienna Convention Trust Fund on Research and Systematic Observations, the activities of the Advisory Committee of the Trust Fund and the recommendations of the tenth meeting of the Ozone Research Managers that had recently concluded.

G. Consultations with the International Organization for Standardization and the International Electrotechnical Commission on safety standards


51. The purpose of those discussions was to inform those organizations of recent undertakings under the Montreal Protocol related to safety standards, with a view to establishing regular dialogue and ensuring the participation of appropriate representatives in the workshop on safety standards organized by the Secretariat that will take place in Bangkok on 10 July 2017 (back-to-back with the thirty-ninth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group).

H. Fifty-ninth session of the World Customs Organization Harmonized System Committee

52. The Secretariat participated in the fifty-ninth session of the World Customs Organization Harmonized System Committee meeting, held in Brussels in March 2017. See related information in paragraphs 29 and 30 of the present document.

I. Network meetings of Ozone Officers

53. In the period between January and May 2017, representatives of the Secretariat participated in the following network meetings of Ozone Officers, organized by UNEP under its OzonAction Compliance Assistance Programme:

(a) South Asia Network Meeting, held in New Delhi from 22 to 26 May 2017;

(b) Annual meeting of the Regional Ozone Network for Europe and Central Asia, held in Ohrid, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, from 10 to 12 May 2017;

(c) Network Meeting of Southeast Asia and the Pacific National Ozone Officers, held in Phuket, Thailand, from 2 to 5 May 2017;

(d) Annual Network Meeting for West Asia National Ozone Officers, held in Dead Sea, Jordan, from 24 to 27 April 2017;

(e) Pacific Islands Ozone Officers Network Meeting, held in Bangkok from 9 to 12 April 2017;

(f) Joint Africa Network Meeting for National Ozone Officers, held in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, from 20 to 24 March 2017.
54. At the above meetings, the Secretariat presented updates on recent developments under the Montreal Protocol, focusing on the Kigali Amendment, its expected impact, the specifics of the ways in which it will work, the requirements for its entry into force, the ratification process, the benefits of ratification and other key issues related to the Amendment. The Secretariat also addressed the status of compliance of parties in the various regions and consulted bilaterally with a number of parties, offering advice on matters of interest.