



China and Montreal Protocol Team Up for Fast Climate Protection

Equivalent of 8 billion tonnes of CO₂ will be eliminated in China

Bargain price less than 5 cents a tonne over 17 years

Washington, DC 25 April 2013 – The Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol will provide China \$385 million over the next 17 years to completely eliminate its industrial production of HCFCs by 2030. HCFCs are industrial gases used in refrigeration, air conditioning, and insulating foams that both warm the climate and destroy the ozone layer.

“The Montreal Protocol once again demonstrated how important it is for climate protection by striking a deal with China this week to cut the equivalent of 8 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions—for the bargain basement price of less than 5 cents a tonne,” said Durwood Zaelke, President of the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development. “This is about the same climate mitigation as all the parties to the Kyoto Protocol have achieved through the first phase of that treaty.”

Zaelke noted that “the deal with China also provides significant protection for the stratospheric ozone layer and helps reduce skin cancers, cataracts, and suppression of the human immune system.”

Under the deal, the funding mechanism of the Montreal Protocol, the Multilateral Fund, is required to pay the “incremental costs” for developing countries making the transition from harmful HCFCs to more environmentally friendly substitutes.

China is the leading producer of HCFCs, with more than 90% of the capacity in developing countries, supplying much of the world’s needs in the refrigeration, air conditioning, and insulating foam sectors.

The Multilateral Fund will cover China’s cost of closing and dismantling its HCFC production facilities, which will include \$95 million to cover the first stage of its HCFC phase-out plan. China is taking these steps to meet its mandatory mitigation requirements under the Montreal Protocol’s decision in 2007 to accelerate the phase out of HCFC specifically for climate protection, as well as ozone protection.

“The phase-out of HCFC production in China means that all the developing countries will comply with the Montreal Protocol and that the Protocol will continue as the world’s best environmental treaty, and best climate treaty,” added Zaelke.

“China’s willingness to accelerate its phase out of HCFCs is a positive sign we hope will be matched by its willingness to avoid moving into the super greenhouse gas HFCs as replacements,” Zaelke said. “Such a move would cancel the climate benefit, and be a major setback for the Montreal Protocol.”

The China deal comes only a week after the Federated States of Micronesia and the Kingdom of Morocco on April 16 formally filed a proposal to use the Montreal Protocol treaty to phase down the use of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), super-greenhouse gases that have global warming potentials hundreds to thousands of times higher than carbon dioxide, and have been the leading replacement for HCFCs in the developed countries. The North American parties, including the United States, Canada and Mexico, filed a similar proposal to phase down HFCs. Both proposals would reduce HFCs by 85-90%, and provide the equivalent of 100 billion tonnes of CO₂ in mitigation. Again, the cost would be pennies a tonne.

The proposals were filed two days after publication of research led by Dr. V. Ramanathan of Scripps Institution of Oceanography concluding that the rate of global warming could be cut in half by 2050, and sea level rise could be reduced by a quarter by the end of the century, through reductions of HFCs and other short lived-climate pollutants, including methane, tropospheric ozone, and black carbon.

“Reducing HFCs and the other SLCPs is critical for slowing both temperature increase and sea-level rise and similar impacts,” said Zaelke, “although cutting CO₂ also is critical.” Zaelke added that, “A failure to cut SLCPs will halt the

impressive gains in poverty reduction of the past few decades, driving millions more into extreme poverty.”

Because three SLCPs are potent air pollutants, cutting them can save millions of lives every year, while significantly increasing crop yields, making this important for promoting sustainable development. In South Asia, for example, air pollution is the leading preventable cause of disease, according to a recent report by the World Health Organization.

The Micronesia and Morocco amendment is [here](#).

The North American proposal is [here](#).

A summary of the sea-level rise study is [here](#).

The abstract of sea-level rise study is [here](#).

IGSD's *Primer on SLCPs* is [here](#).