

Information Note -

Holing Out the Climate Enemies Action under the Montreal Protocol

Bangkok, 10th November 2010, The Montreal Protocol is poised to mitigate 21 gigatonnes of CO₂ equivalent through destruction of Chlorofluorocarbon (CFCs) and related chemicals, which are hidden in the stocks and equipments all around the world. The global phase-out of CFCs and Halons was followed by stock-piling of huge quantities of these Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS). Now, these substances also have huge Global Warming Potential 4 to 10,000 times more than CO₂, commonly known Green House Gases. So, these stock-piles which are of no use now would get emitted into the atmosphere if not destroyed quickly.

United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) along with their partner Emergent Ventures International Pte. Ltd had organised an event on ODS Destruction, particularly, in the Low Volume Consuming Countries (LVCs) in South East Asia. It was organised on the side-lines of the 22nd Meeting of Parties to the Montreal Protocol in Thailand. The event was attended by UN officials, National Ozone Officers from across the world, industry representatives, MLF officials, Basel Convention officials among others, amounting to about a hundred participants.

The event was started off by a welcome message by Atul Bagai, Senior Regional Co-ordinator, UNEP and Dr. Rajendra Shende, Head of Ozone Action Unit, UNEP which was followed by a presentation by Dr. Sumathipala, National Ozone Officer, Sri Lanka. Dr. Sumathipala highlighted the fact that the stock-piles in LVCs could release about 6 giga tonnes of CO₂ equivalent into the atmosphere and if destroyed can accelerate the recovery of the Ozone Layer by 2 years in turn saving countless millions of dollars on health care. But the stock-piles in the individual countries are making their destruction programs economically unviable, but combined together they can become viable. Then a presentation was given by Hu Shaofeng from UNEP. Mr. Shaofeng highlighted an ongoing project by UNEP in Nepal where ODS stock-pile collected is to be destroyed, which is initially funded by the Multi-Lateral Fund and is to be brought under the Voluntary Carbon Market for funding via selling of the Voluntary Emission Reductions (VERs). So, UNEP suggested for a regional program to collect the ODSs from all the LVCs and aggregate them for destruction, which has the potential for 8 to 10 million VERs amounting to 30 to 50 million USD. The proposal was supported by all participants as the only viable solution for the problem faced by the individual countries. Ashutosh Pandey, CEO, Emergent Ventures International Pte. Ltd. presented the outlines of the Carbon Market where the ODS destruction programs can be covered under the VERs. He also stressed on the fact that if this program is linked to Energy Efficiency and Global warming can further help in co-funding it.

A discussion was followed, in which it was labelled as an emerging Green Economy in SE Asia. Members from the Basel Convention supported for the trans-border movement of the ODSs. Members from MLF also said that they are considering a proposal for funding such schemes. The Nepal model was supported by all participants and discussions were on regarding its extension to other nations. Also the technology for destruction and its economic viability also emerged as key issues.

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