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UN environment programme

OzoNews

A fortnightly electronic news update on ozone and climate protection and the implementation of the Montreal Protocol brought to you by OzonAction

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GLOBAL

1. Ultra-potent greenhouse gases still 'major problem' - despite global agreement to phase out

EMISSIONS of ultra-potent greenhouse gases are much higher than official reported figures suggest, according to a recent study.

Researchers at the University of Bristol, UK, have found that global emissions of the greenhouse gas HFC-23 are five times greater than official figures reported by governments.



One expert described unreported emissions of the gas as a "major problem" in the fight against global warming.

HFC-23 is a greenhouse gas 14,700 times more potent than CO2. Most emissions of the gas are thought to be as a byproduct in the production of another substance, HCFC-22, a feedstock used to make refrigerants, fire protection, and PTFE products such as Teflon.

The latest analysis, published last month in Communications Earth & Environment and based on the most recently available atmospheric readings from monitoring stations around the world, showed HFC-23 emissions measured 14,100 t in 2023. While this is a reduction from 17,300 t in 2019, the figure is five times the target level agreed by more than 160 countries in 2016.

A report last October by the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) estimated that 1.56 billion tCO2e of HFC-23 has been released globally since 2016.

Fionnuala Walravens, a senior climate campaigner at EIA, told TCE: "The issue of unreported and huge HFC-23 emissions is a major problem." She added that, while most countries have committed to phasing out the gas, "atmospheric data shows that in reality, it's not happening

effectively.

“To address this, we need a range of measures including better transparency and reporting from the production facilities, more use of alternatives to HCFC-22 and bans on use of HFC-23 as a refrigerant and in fire protection.”

She added: “What makes this even more frustrating is how cheap and easy it is to abate this gas.” Walravens estimates that HFC-23 can be abated for “well below” US$1 per tCO2e.

The latest research found that significant emissions originated in eastern China, the world’s largest producer of HCFC-22, despite its 2018 claim to have almost entirely abated HFC-23 from its production of the feedstock. The researchers calculate that China accounts for a third of the global discrepancy between reported and measured HFC-23 emissions.

The researchers also predict significant emissions from other major HCFC-22-producing countries, including India and Russia, but atmospheric data were not available in these locations.

Global agreements

China, India, and Russia are among the 160 parties to both the 1987 Montreal Agreement to phase out ozone-depleting gases, and the 2016 Kigali Amendment which set targets to phase out ultra-potent greenhouse gases including HFC-23. Under the Kigali Amendment, governments are required to report their HFC-23 emissions every year.

HCFC-22 is controlled by the Montreal Agreement, which was signed when ozone-depleting substances gained widespread notoriety for their use as refrigerants. As such, developed countries agreed to completely phase out HCFC-22 by 2020, and developing countries, including India and China, by 2030. HCFC-22 is no longer used directly in cooling technology, but it continues to be used as feedstock for other types of refrigerant gases.

Walravens said: “The main issue is the need to cut production of HCFC-22 and ensure that any remaining production is carried out in facilities which capture the HFC-23 byproduct.”

Source/Image: Sam Baker, The Chemical Engineer 8 January 2025

2. Women and Girls in Science and the Montreal Protocol



International Day of Women and Girls in Science marked every year on 11 February, is an opportunity to promote the full and equal access to and participation of women and girls in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Including more women and increasing diversity in male dominated areas brings in fresh viewpoints, new talent and creativity benefitting research and innovation. Two women who have passionately worked to support ozone layer and environmental protection talked to the Montreal Protocol’s Ozone Secretariat on what inspired them to pursue STEM-based careers.



Elvira Nigido, Group Sustainability Compliance Manager, A-Gas International from Australia always had a fascination with nature, the environment and science in general from a young age. One of her earliest recollections as a child, was going on long family drives. In an attempt to not get bored or argue with her siblings in the back seat, she would gaze out of the window and wonder about the big rock formations protruding out of the earth, or why a river meandered the way it did, or getting excited to see the once in every 75 year event of Halley's Comet passing by in the night sky, trying to make sense of what she was witnessing and the journey the comet had made.

Early lover of science at school

During secondary schooling, Elvira was already leaning towards science deciding to pursue tertiary studies and a career in a science related field. To avoid being confined to one discipline she chose Environmental Science at the University of Melbourne. In her mind she was getting the best of all worlds, as the course was interdisciplinary in nature, integrating chemistry, biology, physics, geography, geology, environmental law, economics and social sciences.

The course was very academic, but with a silver lining, for it included a compulsory field experience component. This gave Elvira an insight into real life industry drawing not only on her academic learnings but also giving her firsthand experience working with other peers in professional workplaces helping to solve environmental problems.

In 1995, Elvira graduated and obtained her first environmental job as an Environmental Officer for the Australian Government Department responsible for setting up the Australian National Halon Bank (ANHB) in support of Australia's commitments under the Montreal Protocol to phase out the use of halons, an ozone-depleting gas used in fire extinguishers.



Halons took her on a career path that she never could have imagined at that time. Drawing on her environmental science course, undertaking additional studies in environmental management, and always having an openness and passion for on-the-job learning, enabled Elvira to successfully help Australia achieve its Montreal Protocol commitments.

This year Elvira celebrates 30 years in the field of ozone layer and climate protection. What has helped is undoubtedly Elvira's love to engage and interact with people from all over the world. "Nothing beats harnessing the power of people aligned with a sense of purpose and common goals, trying to solve complex problems.

It really gives me a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction," she says. Embracing an open mind to learn from others, to then grow personally and professionally is also another aspect that Elvira loves about her work.

Inspirational roles models and mentors

Throughout our lives, we are inspired by people we meet or those that are closest to us. For Elvira, her migrant parents were her immediate role models. "Their resilience, sacrifice and commitment to hard work showed me what had to be done to be successful. They were always supportive, cheering me and my siblings on to do our best," she said, "and emphasising that by getting a solid education, we would be better placed to thrive and seize the opportunities they couldn't."

Teachers are also often sources of inspiration. Elvira feels she was fortunate that throughout her secondary and tertiary education she had the luck to be taught by very passionate educators. Their strong sense of curiosity and encouragement of exploring and not taking what was being observed at face value, made most of the subject matters interesting and enjoyable. "Except for physics and organic chemistry," admitted Elvira, "which I found difficult to conceptualise some of the time despite my best efforts!"



Overcoming challenges

“Being committed and driven by the solutions that delivered ozone and climate protection,” says Elvira “helped me believe that regardless of the obstacles I was facing, my contribution and leadership influenced and helped make a difference.”

She also realised that to overcome challenges such as unconscious bias or gender discrimination in a very male dominated industry, she had to dig deep noting that “I learnt to become resilient, persistent and determined, and not feeling that it was a sign of weakness but of courage to ask for help when I needed it.”

Supporting the next generation

We all need a helping hand sometimes and this is especially true for women and girls seeking to break gender stereotypes. Which is why Elvira is particularly pleased that at the end of 2024, her employer launched its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programme. The programme is designed to create a work environment where everyone can feel safe, experience a sense of belonging and empowerment to help them achieve their potential, regardless of gender or background.

Giving back to the next generation is also important to Elvira. In recent years she’s volunteered in a STEM industry mentoring programme run by the University of Melbourne. “Having the opportunity to informally connect with up-and-coming students that are looking for guidance about their career paths and offering insights into my professional career experiences that could help with their decision making has been very rewarding”.

While historically the fire protection and refrigerants industry in Australia and internationally has been very male dominated, companies are starting to encourage and support more female talent. “I warmly welcome more women entering the areas of ozone and climate protection. Females bring unique strengths; skill sets and ways of problem solving that foster growth and create opportunities for all.”



Over on the other side of the world, Yosr Allouche, Director General at the International Institute of Refrigeration (IIR), based in France, has always had a deep curiosity about how things work. “From a young age, I was captivated by problem-solving, whether it was exploring natural phenomena or taking apart household objects to uncover their inner workings,” she remembers noting that “one memory that my mother often recalls is the time I completely dismantled her “dear” radio, eager to understand its mechanism, and never assembling it back in the right way.”

For Yosr this was a key moment. While she may not have been able to put the radio back together again, the event was symbolic of her relentless curiosity and desire to decode the world around her. This keen mindset led her to develop a strong interest in mathematics and science, subjects that to her always felt both logical and challenging.

Fascinated by the nuts and bolts of physics and engineering

At school, Yosr was particularly drawn to physics and engineering because they offered a structured way to analyse and solve real-world problems. Encouraged by her father, she pursued engineering studies, focusing first on energy, heat transfer and fluid mechanics and then on refrigeration technologies during my PhD. “I was attracted by the weird yet interesting complexity of my PhD wondering how ‘solar’ and ‘cooling’ can work together at the same time!”

“The French Engineering school system,” recalls Yosr, “is quite different from other

programmes, and tough, starting with a two-year intensive programme called ‘preparatory school’. This culminates in a highly competitive national exam, where only the very top-ranked students can access prestigious engineering schools.” It was during this (not easy) period of her life that Yosr had a key realisation about the role of mathematics, especially algebra, appreciating how algebra had helped train her mind in structured thinking, problem-solving and flexibility. It was this ‘mental gymnastics’ that enabled Yosr to break down intricate challenges, connect abstract ideas to practical solutions, and turn complexity into meaningful impact.

This path ultimately led her to leadership roles, where she could combine technical expertise with strategy and advocacy, aiming to advance sustainable refrigeration and cooling solutions worldwide in her capacity as Director General of the International Institute of Refrigeration.



Inspiration and support close to home

“My brother is a major source of inspiration for me,” notes Yosr, “even though he has nothing to do with refrigeration. He’s a doctor, an anaesthetist actually, but with a very mathematical mindset. I found his dedication, discipline, and ability to apply scientific principles in high-stake situations have inspired me to approach my own field with the same rigour and commitment.

While he helps to save lives, Yosr works to protect the environment and improve people’s quality of life, promoting

access to sustainable cold chains. While their careers are very different, Yosr believes that in the end, both are contributing to a better world, just in different ways.

In terms of support, Yosr also feels incredibly fortunate to have an encouraging family and husband who have stood by her and share her passion and commitment to her new role at the IIR.

Yosr doesn’t feel she encountered any major failures or significant challenges, at least none that she couldn’t overcome through discipline and hard work. “Success largely depended on my own efforts, and I was able to navigate obstacles with determination,” she said, noting though that in her current role, “the challenges are different, broader, more complex, and sometimes sensitive.” But she draws on the IIR legacy and her incredible team to move forward through positive leadership and to create a healthy, and ‘environmentally friendly’ work environment. “I strongly believe that success and efficiency come from a workplace where people feel valued, motivated, and inspired to contribute,” she said.



Empowering women in the cooling sector

Under Yosr’s leadership, IIR is promoting diversity and inclusion within the refrigeration and cooling sector through initiatives such as the CARE (Careers in Refrigeration) Working Group. This group focuses not only on empowering women but also on attracting and developing young talent in the refrigeration industry.

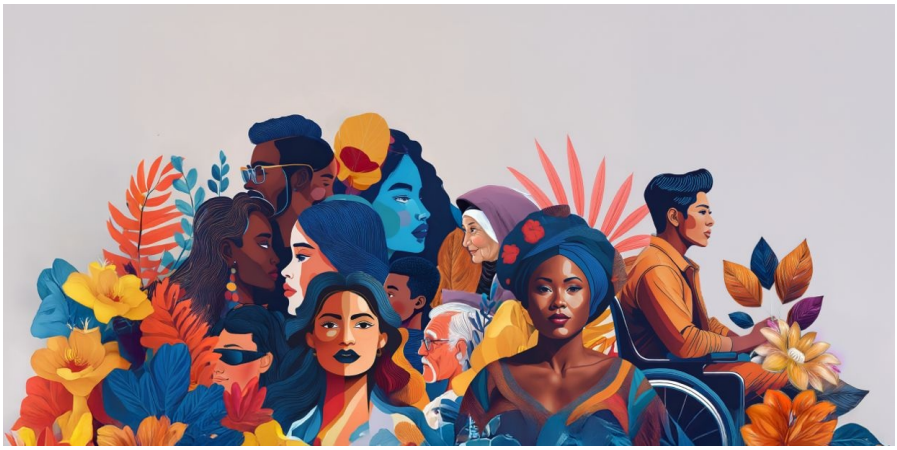
Through mentorship, training and networking opportunities, CARE works to create pathways for both women and young people to build successful careers in refrigeration, ensuring they have the support and resources needed to develop and build their careers.

Yosr passionately believes in the CARE programme noting “We need more people in this field, more regional experts, more diversity.….” and hopes to further promote women during

2025 while IIR is president of the International Network of Women in Cooling (INWIC), a UNEP initiative. During IIR's tenure, Yosr wants to nurture an environment withing the cooling sector where both women and young people are represented in leadership roles, research, and technological innovation. By empowering these groups, she and IIR hope to drive innovation and ensure the future sustainability of the industry.

Source/images: UNEP Ozone Secretariat, 10 February 2025

3. UNEP Annual Report 2024: We are all in this together



"Reining in greenhouse gas emissions…In 2024, eight countries ratified the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, which calls for the phase down of hydrofluorocarbons in the cooling industry. Limiting emissions of these greenhouse gases could curtail global warming by 0.5°C this century. With associated energy efficiency improvements, this could double to 1°C. The UNEP-hosted Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol assisted 70 countries in their efforts to improve the energy efficiency of refrigeration and air[1]conditioning equipment."

What is UNEA?... For the first time, UNEA dedicated a day to increasing the impact of Multilateral Environmental Agreements through more united action. These international accords have served as frameworks to protect endangered species, repair the ozone layer and rein in chemical pollution, among other things."

Harnessing science to address the climate crisis…The Global Nitrous Oxide Assessment showed how the world can cut 40 per cent off emissions of nitrous oxide, a potent greenhouse gas that also damages the ozone layer and pollutes the air. Cutting emissions could prevent 20 million premature deaths by 2050. The report's findings were featured at COP29 and covered by global media." …

Source/image: Extract from UNEP Annual report, February 2025

AFRICA

4. Centro Studi Galileo completed a five-months run of HVAC/R Training in North Africa

Centro Studi Galileo (CSG) continues to strengthen its position as a global leader in HVAC/R training by conducting a series of specialized sessions in Egypt and Morocco, focusing on both alternative and flammable refrigerants as well as the F-Gas certification.

In **September 2024**, as part of a **Training of Trainers (TOT) project in cooperation with the UN Environment Programme – OzonAction**, CSG held two courses at the **STI Ameria Center of Excellence** in Cairo, a facility affiliated with the Egyptian government.



Led by trainers **Said El Harch** and **Kivanc Aslantas**, the sessions covered both theoretical and practical aspects of handling flammable refrigerants, including **R290 and R32**, with a strong focus on **safety and regulatory compliance**. Participants also took the **REAL Alternatives test**, achieving a high success rate and demonstrating **advanced skills acquisition**. These programs aim to facilitate a broad adoption of **low-GWP refrigerants** while ensuring **high safety standards for workers**.

Advanced HVAC Training: Another Milestone in Egypt

From **November 16thto December 3rd, 2024**, CSG expanded its training activities with an **advanced course for 60 HVAC Expert Technicians** from the five leading Egyptian manufacturers of air conditioning units: **Power, Fresh, Miraco, Unionaire, and Elaraby**.



Partially hosted at the **STI Ameria Center of Excellence** and **within the companies' laboratories**, the program combined **theoretical and practical training**, focusing on **advanced maintenance techniques for after-sales practices**. The sessions were led by national expert **instructors George Edward Youssef Soliman and Mohamed Amin Noureldin**, who provided in-depth insights into **innovative technologies and post-sales solutions**.



F-Gas Certifications: Two Sessions Held in Morocco

Between **December 2024 and January 2025**, CSG further conducted **two F-Gas certification sessions in Casablanca, Morocco**, training a selected group of national trainers previously mentored by **Said El Harch**, who was joined in the field by **Madi Sakande**, **President and Founder of the Pan-African Association U-3ARC**.

Ti potrebbe interessare: [“Digitalization for Refrigeration and Air Conditioning”: on March 29, CSG New International webinar]

These sessions, **part of a broader project led by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization – UNIDO**, aimed to certify new F-Gas trainers, ensuring that more national professionals could become **qualified HVAC/R assessors in the near future**. This initiative follows **CSG's core mission of knowledge-sharing** to foster a **sustainable and skilled workforce worldwide**.

The **first session**, held from **December 18 to 20**, took place at the **Institut Spécialisé du Génie Thermique et du Froid**, while the **second session**, from **January 22 to 25**, was hosted by the **City of Crafts and Skills of Casablanca**, both excellently equipped. Both **Egypt and Morocco** are rapidly developing their **HVAC/R infrastructure and production capabilities**, and the efforts of **Centro Studi Galileo**, thanks to its solid and long-lasting cooperation with the **United Nations Agencies**, are helping to solidify this **growth into a long-term, efficient, and reliable resource** for the **North African region**.

Source/images: Centro Studi Galileo, 6 February 2025

5. Burkina Faso Enhances RAC Training with New Manual



The National Institute for the Training of Education Personnel (INFPE) in Burkina Faso, along with the ROCA project, has developed a new training manual for refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC) trainers. The manual, designed to improve the education of young refrigeration technicians, consists of 84 pages across four chapters.

The chapters cover general knowledge of natural elements, the impact of refrigerants on the environment, regulations on environmental protection, and energy efficiency factors. Each chapter follows a structured format to aid readability, including objectives, self-assessment diagnostics, essential theoretical content, answers to diagnostic questions, and reflective activities.

Adapted from "Fit for Green Cooling" modules and tailored to local needs, the manual supports hundreds of students through INFPE's regional directorates. The ROCA project also trained 150 trainers and over 500 technicians across Burkina Faso and other participating countries.

Co-financed by the European Union and Germany's BMZ, and implemented by GIZ Proklima, ROCA works with the National Ozone Units of Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, and Senegal.

Source/image: Refindustry Refrigeration Tech Hub, 6 January 2025

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

6. Addressing the RAC skills shortage



In the wake of recent reports highlighting a shortage of skilled refrigeration and air conditioning technicians in Australia, the Australian Refrigeration Council (ARC) says it is actively addressing these challenges.
According to the latest 2025 data from the ARC, the RAC sector employs over 43,000 skilled technicians and has more than 8,700 trainees in the pipeline, making it one of the largest in the trade sector.

With median weekly earnings of about AU$2,000, it is also one of the most highly paid.

As noted in the latest Cold Hard Facts report, in 2022 there were than 62 million units of vapour compression-driven equipment in Australia, a 15 per cent increase since 2016. RAC systems account for up to 24 per cent of Australia's electricity consumption, underscoring their essential role across households, businesses, and transport sectors. Additionally, industry efforts have led to a 10 per cent reduction in climate emissions from RAC equipment

since 2016.

The ARC says it is helping the RAC sector in expanding training opportunities, providing resources to help businesses attract and retain skilled technicians, and advocating for policies that promote workforce development and support industry growth.

“Looking ahead, as the demand for energy-efficient and sustainable practices continues to rise, the ARC is well-equipped with robust data, resources, and training initiatives to lead the industry,” reads a statement from the ARC.

“The goal is to ensure that the RAC sector is well-prepared to meet both current and future market demands.

“As the principal authority for licensing and regulatory compliance in the RAC sector, the ARC upholds high standards of safety, environmental protection, and professionalism. Its efforts support workforce development and compliance, helping businesses and technicians thrive in a rapidly evolving world.”

For more information on licensing requirements, industry updates, and initiatives, visit the ARC website.

Source/Image: HVAC&R News, 13 January 2025

7. Safeguarding Australian exports logs - methyl bromide



Australian log exports rely on the fumigant methyl bromide (MB) to control pests and meet the phytosanitary requirements of key markets such as China and India. However, MB was banned internationally for specific uses under the United Nation’s Montreal Protocol because it degrades stratospheric ozone. **There is increasing international pressure to cease use of MB for other purposes, such for export logs.** For example, the European Union have banned the use of MB for all treatments including quarantine, and other countries like New Zealand mandate the recapture and destruction of the compound.

Work Safe Australia recently reviewed the use of fumigants including MB and changed its time-weighted average (TWA) value from 5 to 1 ppm. Practically, the TWA value guides the safety standards and operational procedures imposed by government for MB fumigations. Therefore, the APVMA will need to review the buffer zone distances and recapture requirements associated with MB use before the new TWA values come into place on December 1, 2026. Increased buffer zones for MB use could have massive implications for Australian log export, as seen in New Zealand where they increased up to 700 m. Therefore, industry urgently needs strategic directions to address the risk of MB withdrawal and restrictions on its use, especially new research on alternative treatments.

In response, Forest and Wood Products Australia funded work led by VSICA Research to address these issues and provide strategic direction for industry. The project aims to:

1. Review all potential MB alternatives for log export,
2. Evaluate the current international regulatory environment and risk of MB phase-out,
3. Consult exporters and fumigators to benchmark current MB use in logs and identify potential barriers to adoption of alternative treatments,
4. Conduct proof-of-concept research on a new ozone-friendly alternative (methyl iodide) with equivalent effectiveness and application technology to MB, and
5. Design a strategic research program for FWPA on alternative(s) for industry.

As part of the project, VSICA Research have already completed an extensive literature review of 114 international studies published in the scientific literature on alternative treatments to

MB for control of pests in export logs.

The review identified the advantages and disadvantages of different treatments including their relative cost, with the fumigants methyl iodide, ethanedinitrile, sulfuryl fluoride, and phosphine emerging as short-term prospects, and joule and microwave heating as longer-term solutions. Preliminary field experiments conducted in Portland, Victoria showed that methyl iodide killed natural and surrogate pest populations in log stacks very effectively. Though more research is required, early data also showed that methyl iodide can kill wood wasp larvae (*Sirex noctilio*) in logs, which is an important quarantine pest for Australia's trading partners (Fig 1).



If you are interested in learning more about the research project or have any questions relating to the topics discussed, please email Dr. Dylan McFarlane at dylan.science@outlook.com.

Source: Dr. Dylan McFarlane (VSICA Research, VIC) / Woodtech, 5 February 2025. Image: Woodtech

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

8. Brazil advances ozone protection with final HCFC phase-out plan

Brazil, the largest country in South America, is cementing its leadership in ozone and climate protection with the approval of the third and final stage of its Hydrochlorofluorocarbon Phase-Out Management Plan (HPMP). This milestone underscores Brazil's commitment to fully eliminating HCFCs, harmful ozone-depleting substances, by 2030.
Building on the success of earlier phases, stage III of the HPMP focuses on the servicing sector and includes innovative demonstration projects aimed at preventing the transition to high-global-warming-potential (high-GWP) HFC technologies.



These projects, which target chillers and industrial refrigeration applications, are expected to pave the way for future regulatory measures under the Kigali Implementation Plan.

To support the HCFC phase-out, Brazil will implement guidelines for recovering and disposing of obsolete refrigerants from decommissioned transport trucks, reducing emissions during the process. A robust regulatory framework, developed during earlier stages, will ensure sustainability. This includes a ban on HCFC-141b imports for polyurethane foam production, revised HCFC import quotas for gradual reductions, and the adoption of standards to encourage best practices in refrigeration and air conditioning.

Additionally, a nationwide technician certification system will enhance servicing standards and promote the safe adoption of low-GWP alternatives, securing long-term environmental and industry benefits.

Source/Image Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, 10 February 2025

9. 'T&T serious about mitigating ozone depletion'



This country has received US$543,259 in grant funding to assist in implementing national obligations under the first part of the Kigali Implementation Plan regulating the production and consumption of ozone-depleting substances.
This funding is for the period 2023-2029.

In an interview with Business Guardian, manager of the National Ozone Unit, Ministry of Planning and Development Dr Marissa Gowrie said grant funding for the implementation of the Montreal Protocol is provided by the multilateral fund of the Protocol.

Over the years through these funds T&T has been able to provide training to technicians, access tools and equipment, support for academic institutions, training to regulatory and border control agencies, technology transfer and upgrades to the policy and legislative framework.

Dr Gowrie explained the Montreal Protocol has had a tremendous effect on aiding the world in arresting the deterioration of the ozone layer. Countries around the world made a landmark decision in October 2016 to include under its mandate chemicals that were used as ozone-depleting alternatives, but which have negative effects on the climate, such hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

“T&T signed on to this amendment to the Protocol, known as the Kigali Amendment, and as such incorporates the climate challenge into the work of saving the ozone layer,” Gowrie said.
She noted that these HFC gases, like other gases under the Montreal Protocol, are controlled under a licensing system that is mandated by the Montreal Protocol and administered nationally by the Ministry of Trade and Industry- Trade Licensing Unit, the T&T Bureau of Standards, the Customs and Excise Division, the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Inspectorate and the National Ozone Unit (NOU).

Gowrie explained that T&T’s implementation of the Kigali Amendment began on January 1, 2024, and going into 2025, all importers are reminded that the importation of HFCs, such as all refrigerant and refrigeration and air conditioning equipment and parts, requires an import licence prior to import issued by the Trade Licence Unit of the Ministry of Trade and Industry.
Importers of HFCs, she said, must also possess premises registration from the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Inspectorate for the storage of these gases if they are to be sold wholesale.

Importers are also be reminded that:

1. A licence is required before import or export of all refrigerants as well as, refrigeration and air conditioning parts and equipment, which can be obtained from the Trade Licence Unit, Ministry of Trade, and Industry in accordance with the Imports and Exports Control Regulations 1941, Legal Notices No. 290 and 291 of 2014 and Legal Notices No. 212 and 213 of 2022;
2. In addition to this, for import or export of all Hydrocarbon (HC) refrigerants and HFC a licence is also required from the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Inspectorate by the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Act 1979 and Toxic Chemicals Regulations 2007 of T&T;
3. Import of all assembled equipment using hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) are not allowed into T&T;
4. Import of Methyl Bromide for non-quarantine and pre-shipment use and Halon are not allowed into T&T;
5. Premises registration is required for all chemicals which are classified as toxic chemicals under the Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Act 1979 and Toxic Chemicals Regulations 2007 of T&T including butane and propane if sold by wholesale, packaged, or used in manufacturing;
6. Only quota holders will be granted licences to import HCFC refrigerants which include R22, R408, and R123. All other HCFCs are not allowed, including R141B and R142B or mixtures thereof, including polyols, used in foam manufacture.

She said these controls greatly assist this country in maintaining the national obligations of the Montreal Protocol.

She also pointed out that proper maintenance on a home air conditioning system will keep it running smoothly and prevent consuming excess energy to cool one's home.

"Additionally, general maintenance and periodic cleaning will save you from unnecessary costs associated with your utility bill and expensive repairs. It is recommended that you have a professionally certified technician to do yearly check-ups for your air conditioning system; to evaluate your system's efficiency and to check for general wear and tear."

Dr Gowrie stressed that challenges still exist about ensuring that consumers make wise environmentally friendly choices in the purchase of refrigeration and air conditioning equipment and engage technicians who are professionally certified and practice good refrigeration practices.

"We must strive to be ozone friendly, which means taking individual action to reduce and eliminate impacts on the stratospheric ozone layer caused by the products you buy, the appliances and equipment that your household or business use, or the manufacturing process used by your company.

"Products made with, or containing, ozone-depleting substances (ODS) such as CFCs, HCFCs, halons, methyl chloroform, and methyl bromide can contribute to ozone layer depletion. Alternatives to these products, which are also not harmful to the climate, should be used."

"We must also take the necessary steps to protect ourselves from the harmful ultraviolet rays emitted by the sun, especially on a tropical island such as ours. Using umbrellas, long-sleeved clothing, caps with brims, sunglasses, and sunblock with UV protection when going into the sun protects us from skin cancer, eye cataracts, wrinkling of the skin, and weakening of the immune system by shielding ourselves from UV rays," Dr Gowrie added.

Planning and Development Minister Pennelope Beckles last week said reducing and phasing out these ozone-depleting substances will reduce rates of skin cancer, cataracts, weakened immune systems in humans, and damage to marine life and plant ecosystems due to excessive UV radiation reaching the Earth's surface.

She outlined that this process is important to the Ministry's role in placing the environment at the centre of social and economic development as per T&T's National Development Strategy – Vision 2030 and its commitment to the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The National Ozone Unit of T&T was honoured in 2007 for the work that it has done to protect the ozone layer, and received the Montreal Protocol Implementers Award, in recognition of this country's noteworthy contributions toward restoration of the Ozone Layer at the 20th Anniversary of the Montreal Protocol Celebrations, on Monday September, 17, 2007 in Montreal Canada.

Source/image: Trinidad & Tobago Guardian, 22 January 2025

WEST ASIA

10. Environment Minister discusses global cooperation on sustainable cooling projects



Manama, Feb. 16 (BNA): Dr. Mohamed bin Mubarak Bin Dainah, Minister of Oil and Environment and Special Envoy for Climate Affairs, received international delegations from the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Montreal

Protocol Multilateral Fund on the sidelines of an international workshop organised by the Supreme Council for Environment (SCE) on the availability of air conditioning technologies in high-temperature countries.

Dr. Bin Dainah met with the World Bank delegation, led by Jiang Ru, to discuss future cooperation on implementing Bahrain's national cooling plans and projects to phase down hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) following the approval of Montreal Protocol Multilateral Fund's initiatives.

He also reviewed a presentation on the World Bank's experience in financing energy efficiency projects for air conditioning through revolving funds, which have helped reduce energy consumption and operational costs in several countries.

The minister also met with the UNDP delegation, led by Xiaofang Zhou, Director, Chemical and Waste hub and Montreal Protocol unit, BPPS, UNDP, to discuss the programme's vision for implementing sustainable cooling projects and addressing challenges related to reducing ozone-depleting substances. The meeting explored means to support Bahrain's efforts in developing cooling strategies that align with the country's climate conditions and global environmental standards.

Dr. Bin Dainah discussed with Dr. Tina Birmpili, Chief Officer of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, the fund's support for Bahrain's environmental efforts since 1995, including the Hydrochlorofluorocarbon Phase-out Management Plan (HPMP), which extends until 2030.

Dr. Bin Dainah emphasised the importance of international cooperation in advancing sustainable cooling technologies and enhancing countries' capacities to meet their environmental commitments under the Montreal Protocol by adopting innovative, eco-friendly cooling solutions suited to regional climate challenges.

Source/image: Bahrain News Agency, 10 February 2025

FEATURED

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