

Let us make HCFC Free Sri Lanka

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Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) are ozone depleting substances (ODS) controlled under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Forty different HCFCs of Ozone Depletion Potentials (ODPs) varying from 0.001 to 0.52 are listed in Group I of Annex C to the Montreal Protocol. Due to their low ODPs, HCFCs were widely used as transitional replacements for chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), more potent ODS which were phased out in developed countries by 31 December 1995 and in developing countries by 31 December 2009.

In 2009 the global annual production of HCFCs reported to the UNEP Ozone Secretariat was about 38,000 ODP tonnes, which corresponds to about 700,000 metric tonnes. While the ODPs of HCFCs are in the low range, large quantities which are emitted during production, transportation, storage and use contribute significantly to ozone layer depletion. Since most HCFCs are also potent greenhouse gases having Global Warming Potentials (GWPs) in some cases thousand of times higher than that of CO₂ and comparable with CFC-12 (see Table 1)..

Table 1.

ODP and GWP values of the most commonly used HCFCs and HCFC-containing mixtures

| Substance or Mixture | ODP | GWP |
|----------------------|-------|------|
| CO ₂ | 1 | 1 |
| CFC-12 | 1 | 1850 |
| HCFC-22 | 0.055 | 1810 |
| HCFC-123 | 0.020 | 77 |
| HCFC-141b | 0.110 | 725 |
| HCFC-142b | 0.065 | 2310 |
| R-401A | 0.037 | 1100 |
| R-409A | 0.039 | 1585 |

Table shows that phase-out of these substances will not only help in the recovery of the ozone layer, but also significantly mitigate climate change

Today, HCFCs are widely used as refrigerants, foam blowing agents, solvents, aerosol propellants and very limited application as fire fighting agents. As significant quantities of HCFCs are used in mixtures with other HCFCs or with other substances, the Parties to the Montreal Protocol decided that quantities of ODS (including HCFCs) contained in mixtures shall be part of the consumption calculation. However, ODS (including HCFCs) contained in products (including equipment) are not controlled.

Parties to the Montreal Protocol are obliged to follow the phase-out schedules for HCFC production and consumption that were agreed upon in 2007 in Montreal (Decision XIX/6). Phase-out schedule of HCFC consumption to be followed by countries operating under Article 5 of the Montreal Protocol (i.e. developing countries) is as follows.

| | | |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Baseline | : | Average of 2009 and 2010 production and consumption |
| Freeze by | : | 2013 |
| 10% reduction by | : | 2015 |
| 35% reduction by | : | 2020 |
| 67.5 % reduction by | : | 2025 |
| 100% Phase out by | : | 2030 |

If the service sector may further require HCFC hereafter, maximum of 2.5% will be allowed to import until 2040.

The Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol requires in Decision 63/17 that from the 68th meeting of the Executive Committee (i.e. from early 2013) onwards for all submissions of new HCFC projects, countries must confirm that they have established an enforceable licensing and a quota system for HCFC imports, and if relevant also for HCFC production.

Accordingly, the National Ozone Unit (NOU) of the Ministry of Environment & Renewable Energy has established the quota system, which is in operational from 1st January 2013. For issuing Import Quota, the following methodology has been adopted by the NOU.

1. Prepare a Database of Importers for 2009,2010,2011 and up to 30th June 2012
2. Prepare a list of Importers.
3. Calculate the mean value of total imports in 4 years (2009-2012) by individual importer in each group
4. Allocation of import quota for individual importers is based on mean value of imports.
5. A committee chaired by the Director of the NOU reviews the progress of quota system implementation on a periodic basis.
6. If any importer does not use the given quota completely, balance amount of quota at the date of assessment will be retreated by the NOU and redistribute among existing importers and new importers.

Process of import of HCFCs starts with submitting an application to NOU by the eligible importer. When the quota is determined and the importer meets the required conditions, a recommendation is issued to Controller General, Import & Export within a 5 working days to issue an Import Licence.

Issued quotas are subjected to 3 months validity period. The introduced quota system operates on basis of calendar year and expires at the end of the same year. In case any enterprise wants to relinquish its allocated quota, NOU may decide to re-distribute it among other importers.

Sri Lanka Government issued a Gazette Extraordinary No.1821/40 of 01.08.2013 under the Import & Export Controller Act No.1 of 1969 in respect of control measures of Import and Export of HCFCs as a legislation.

NOU is pleased to entertain any request for further information or clarification and invite to visit NOU's website www.noulanka.lk