



United Nations Environment Programme

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة • 联合国环境规划署
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

Meeting and Workshop Highlights

The Sixth Meeting of Pacific Islands Countries (PIC) Network of Ozone Officers and Training of Customs Officers



Nuku'alofa, 14 March 2014 - The Government of the Kingdom of Tonga, through Ministry of Lands, Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources, hosted the *Sixth Meeting of Pacific Islands Countries (PIC) Network of Ozone Officers and Training of Customs Officers* on 10-14 March 2014. The objectives of these events were to deliver to PIC National Ozone and Customs Enforcement officers the needed skills and resources required to sustain national implementation of phase-out measures under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. All the Pacific island countries are Parties to the Montreal Protocol and are in compliance with the obligations.

Countries of the Pacific Islands Network are: Cooks Islands, Niue, Solomon Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Republic of Marshall Islands, Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Nauru, and Papua New Guinea; and with Australia and New Zealand participating as non-Article 5 partners. All PICs are low-volume (ODS) consuming countries and are Small Islands Development States (SIDS). Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu are also classified as least developed countries. The Executive Committee (ExCom) of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol established the Regional Network for Pacific Island Countries (PICs) on 12 November 2008. This is the newest Regional Network established under the Multilateral Fund.

Using an engaging participatory approach, the workshop highlighted the importance of effective monitoring and reporting, sharing lessons learnt, and addressed emerging issues related to the hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFC) phase-out management plans (HPMPs). HCFCs are used mostly as a refrigerant in refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) servicing and is the major ODS used in this region. The meeting elaborated on the approaches to the introduction of longer-term non-ODS, energy-efficient refrigerant alternatives. The National Ozone Officers (NOOs) were also encouraged to work with national counterparts on the Montreal Protocol decision XXV/9 on the SIDS and in preparation for the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States to be held from 1 to 4 September 2014 in Apia, Samoa.

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A parallel training was conducted for the Customs Officers which included a discussion on the national implications of the recent decisions of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol and the ExCom. The Customs workshop aimed to increase institutional and individual capacity of the Customs agencies on the prevention and control of transboundary illegal trafficking of waste, ODS and other chemicals; provide a refresher train-the-trainers course for Senior Customs officers in monitoring, controlling, and reporting of environmentally sensitive commodities under Multilateral Environmental Agreements and exploring opportunities for further strengthening cooperation between National Ozone Unit and Customs authorities for the implementation of the ODS import/export licensing/quota system, controlling ODS import/export and combating illegal ODS trade. The training workshop was supported by the Regional Enforcement Network for Chemicals and Waste, with funds from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, and implemented by UNEP.

The meeting was officially opened by the Hon. Samiu Vaipulu, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure. This Pacific Islands regional event was organised in collaboration with the Ozone Secretariat, (UNEP) OzonAction Branch, the Division of Environment Law and Conventions, and the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions. National Ozone and Customs officers from 14 Pacific island countries and Australia's Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities attended the meeting, with the participation of representatives from the Secretariat of Pacific Region Environment Programme, Oceana Customs Organisation, Fisheries Forum Association and the Australia Pacific Training College.

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Note to Editors:

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the United Nations system's designated entity for addressing environmental issues at the global and regional level. Its mandate is to coordinate the development of environmental policy consensus by keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of governments and the international community for action.

Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer is an international treaty designed to protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production and consumption of a number of substances believed to be responsible for ozone depletion. The treaty was opened for signature on September 16, 1987 and entered into force on January 1, 1989. Since then, it has undergone five revisions, in 1990 (London), 1992 (Copenhagen), 1995 (Vienna), 1997 (Montreal), and 1999 (Beijing). Due to its universal adoption and continuous implementation it has been hailed as an example of exceptional international cooperation "Perhaps the single most successful international agreement to date..."

The Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol was established in 1990 to assist developing countries to comply with the control measures of the Protocol. It is managed by an Executive Committee which is responsible for overseeing the operation of the Fund. The Committee comprises seven members from developed and seven members from developing countries.