



MEDIA ADVISORY

UNEP promotes safe refrigeration and air-conditioning practices for increased co-benefits to ozone layer and climate change in Africa

Workshop on the Establishment and Operation of Certification Schemes and National/Regional RAC Associations

Kigali, 10 June 2014 – Ozone Officers from 28 African English and Portuguese speaking countries are gathering in Kigali, Rwanda from 11-13 June for a capacity building workshop that will also bring together regional refrigeration and air-conditioning experts, European Refrigeration Association (AREA) and resource persons at the initiative of UNEP Compliance Assistance Programme in Africa in collaboration with the Government of Rwanda, and supported by Multilateral Fund Secretariat.

The workshop, the first of its kind in English-speaking Africa, aims to train technicians in the field of refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) to ensure a safe handling and servicing of refrigeration and air-conditioning equipment as part of the alternatives to hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFCs), with the view to promoting sound management of these substances and assisting countries in meeting the target of 10% phase-down of HCFC by 2015 as set by the Montreal Protocol.

The workshop is also intended to help the technicians to set up national associations that would guide and assist the operations in the refrigeration and air-conditioning sectors as a way of ensuring that both formal and informal business operations are certified and follow the agreed international standards.

The meeting will provide a platform to share experiences and knowledge on HCFC phase-out technologies and help the sector in controlling HCFCs as ozone depleting substances. The RAC experts will receive training from the European Refrigeration Association on safe refrigeration practices, based on their knowledge and experience on establishment and operationalization of refrigeration and air-conditioning associations as well as on identifying new techniques for the adoption of HCFC alternative technologies and develop strategies for addressing any barriers that may arise.

The achievements of the Montreal Protocol over its 27 year history in phasing out the production and consumption of ozone depleting substances (ODS) have positioned the ozone story as the most successful environmental story as most countries have already phased-out most of the ODS.

It is important to note that in addition to depleting the ozone layer, ozone depleting substances controlled by the Montreal Protocol have also powerful global warming gases. As such, activities under the Montreal Protocol have not only contributed to reversing the damage done to the ozone layer but also

resulted in greenhouse gas reductions equivalent to several billion tons of CO₂-equivalent, making the Montreal Protocol a key contributor to the global fight against climate change.

This workshop comes ahead of 1 January 2015 target to meet a ten percent step down from the freeze level of HCFCs phase-out set by the Montreal Protocol on ODS. Under the Montreal Protocol on ODS, countries are taking specific time-targeted actions to reduce and eliminate the production and consumption of man-made chemicals that destroy the stratospheric ozone layer..

Therefore, this training comes at an opportune time, in the wake of alternative technologies being considered in the phase-out of HCFCs which may raise concerns on safety, flammability, toxicity and low operating pressures which need to be considered when handling such alternatives.

Note to Editors:

Montreal Protocol: The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer is an international treaty designed to reduce the production and consumption of ozone depleting substances in order to reduce their abundance in the atmosphere, and thereby protect the earth's fragile ozone Layer. The original Montreal Protocol was agreed on 16 September 1987 and entered into force on 1 January 1989.

UNEP Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP): CAP's primary role is to assist Article 5 countries in actual or potential non-compliance to be in compliance with their obligations under the Montreal Protocol. It cooperates closely with the Ozone Secretariat, to identify countries that have difficulties in maintaining compliance or are at risk of being in noncompliance, with particular reference paid to countries in post-conflict situations. The Regional CAP staff provides direct assistance to Ozone Officers and other priority stakeholders in response to specific needs identified by Article 5 countries.

ANGLOPHONE NETWORK: The Ozone Officers Network for English-speaking Africa comprises of 28 countries - Angola, Botswana, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Republic of South Sudan, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Special assistance is provided to two Portuguese-speaking countries in the Network (Angola and Mozambique) mainly through special sessions/meetings/group discussions as well as through the involvement of Portugal during the meetings.

In Kigali:

Lemigo Hotel

Kimihurura

Time: 8:30 am (local time)

Speakers:

Official opening by the Ministry of Natural Resources, Rwanda

- H.E Mr. Stanislas Kamanzi, Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources

UNEP – Regional office for Africa

- Mr. Desta Mebratu, Deputy Director, Regional Office for Africa

Rwanda Environment Management Authority

- Rose Mukankomaje, Director General, Rwanda Environment Management Authority

- Ms. Juliet Kabera, Coordinator, National Ozone Unit, Rwanda Environment Management Authority

Additional information:

OzonAction Programme: www.unep.org/ozonaction

Ozone Secretariat: www.ozone.unep.org

Multilateral Fund: www.multilateralfund.org

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