

# OzonAction

*A newsletter dedicated to the protection of the ozone layer and implementation of the Montreal Protocol*

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## VIEWPOINT

### Testing Times Ahead for the Multilateral Fund



**The first financial mechanism to be born of an international environmental agreement, the Multilateral Fund, has been the economic muscle behind the widely hailed success of the Montreal Protocol. Yet as MARIA NOLAN, the Fund's Chief Officer, warns, this positive tale could face formidable challenges in the near future.**

The Fund's headline achievement has been the phase-out of over 149,000 tonnes of controlled substances in the consumption sector and 60,600 tonnes in the production sector, as measured in December 2003. But it has brought about many other, less obvious advances. It has prompted massive transfers of technology to developing countries, of which 134 have received support from the Fund. Its application to environmental problem-solving has staked out important new territory in the way international environmental agreements operate.

This success would not have come about without the broad and willing participation of both industrialized and developing (in Protocol terminology, non-Article 5 and Article 5) countries, the ready availability of funding support from contributing Parties, and the dedication and hard work of the four implementing agencies and the National Ozone Units. Even so, the mission of the Fund and of the instruments it supports cannot yet be said to be fulfilled. The ozone layer which plays so vital a part in safeguarding our environment and protecting the health of present and future generations, is still at risk. The Fund could face formidable challenges in the near future in relation to compliance. Any lapse in our resolve to make the Protocol work could jeopardize our past gains.

With the 'compliance period' now well under way, the Fund is concentrating its resources on helping countries achieve their compliance targets. To this end, emphasis has been set in the past few years on a country-driven approach, whereby countries achieve compliance mainly by devising and implementing national/sector phase-out plans. Monitoring the progress of these activities is becoming more challenging and it will be critical to identify countries that are failing to comply with the control schedules or face potential difficulties. Interplay between the Executive Committee and the Implementation Committee, which monitors cases of non-compliance and prepares recommendations for the Meeting of the Parties, is therefore vital. Careful monitoring of phase-out plans and other activities will help to identify risks of non-compliance early on.

Entirely new problems, such as the growth in illegal trade in ozone depleting substances (ODS) between developing countries will require new approaches focusing on a new mix of stakeholder organizations and groups, such as customs agencies and enforcement officials. The final major challenge to the Fund will be

## Contents

|                                            |    |
|--------------------------------------------|----|
| ViewPoint                                  | 1  |
| Special Feature                            | 1  |
| Compliance News                            | 2  |
| Spotlight on Tajikistan                    | 5  |
| Special Feature                            | 6  |
| Critical Use Exemptions for Methyl Bromide | 7  |
| TechTalk                                   | 8  |
| Zero Tolerance for Illegal ODS Trade       | 8  |
| Agency News                                | 9  |
| E-Newsletters                              | 10 |
| New Publications                           | 10 |
| Progress in Ratification                   | 10 |

the possibility that contributing governments may become less willing to provide the resources required for total phase-out, particularly in the final stages where the activities involved are small-scale and difficult to complete. By then, demands for spending on other environmental priorities will have grown, creating competition for the finite resources available for investment in sustainable development.

The best argument to counter 'donor fatigue' is simply that the Montreal Protocol works, clearly and unequivocally, and that other international environmental agreements will benefit from the positive signal given, and the valuable experience gained thanks to its successful resolution of a major threat to global environmental security. The signal must also convey that the Protocol is still necessary and its continued success is heavily reliant on unceasing maintenance of commitments by developed and developing countries alike.

## SPECIAL FEATURE

### MBTOC CO-CHAIRS ASSESS THE IMPACT OF THE EMOP

*Following the decisions on applications for critical use exemptions (CUEs) for methyl bromide at the Extraordinary Meeting of the Parties (EMOP), Drs JONATHAN BANKS and NAHUM MARBAN MENDOZA, Co-chairs of the Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee (MBTOC), discuss on p. 6 of this edition some of the complex issues that surround this topic.*



Organic apple grows without methyl bromide



## Africa

### *Experts Warn of Market Pressure for More Methyl Bromide Imports to Francophone Africa*

While the world prepared for Montreal Protocol talks to consider methyl bromide (MB) critical use exemptions (CUEs) for developed countries (see p. 6), representatives from 18 francophone African countries, meeting at a Regional Workshop on Experiences of Use of Methyl Bromide Alternatives in Dakar, Senegal from 8-10 March, pledged a total phase-out of MB before 2015 international deadline set under the Montreal Protocol. They agreed that effective alternatives could help cut their use of MB by 20 per cent, by 2005. They also noted the success of communications initiatives by UNEP, UNDP, UNIDO, FAO and national NGOs in Kenya and Senegal, aimed at convincing Africa's farmers to adopt MB-free production. Many of the countries present at the workshop are involved in the regional project implemented by UNDP.

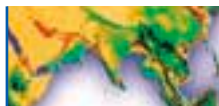
Members of the Methyl Bromide Technical Option Committee (MBTOC) presented information about chemical and non-chemical alternatives to MB use and details of soil pathogens and weeds controlled by each method.

All stressed the advantages of weaving these alternatives into an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach. From discussions it emerged that although more than 20 MB alternatives were proving viable under trial in the region, they still raised issues of cost, efficiency, availability, access and procedures. More worrying, the participants learned that importers were still acting in ways that tended to prolong the use of MB. Though some accept exports treated with approved alternatives, buyers from Latin America and other developing regions still insist on MB fumigation, most notably for cocoa beans and cotton exported out of Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal. Participants will work through their delegations to OEWG to recommend that the Technical and Economic Assessment Panel (TEAP) provide the next MOP with procedures that importers could use to justify MB fumigation of agricultural products for which alternatives exist, as itemized in MBTOC's latest (2002) report.

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# >> COMPLIANCE NEWS



## Asia and the Pacific

### *100 per cent Ratification of the Montreal Protocol Approaching Reality*

One hundred percent commitment to the Montreal Protocol from countries in Asia and the Pacific is close, a recent meeting in Agra, India of Ozone Officers from around the region, was told. Afghanistan and Bhutan, not being Parties to the Protocol, participated as observers to see at firsthand and through contact with other delegations what full participation in the Montreal Protocol 'family' means. In bilateral meetings with Pakistan and Iran, the Afghanistan delegation investigated the ratification process and its requisite follow-up. There was talk, too, of possible visits by representatives of these

neighbouring countries, to help bolster political support. Bhutan applauded progress made by other countries towards ODS phase-out and set a provisional deadline of July 2004 to ratify the Protocol. Good news came two months later when Afghanistan deposited the instruments of ratification on 17 June (see p. 10) thus becoming the 187th Party to the Protocol. This is a clear signal that 'South-South' cooperation is working well in the region.

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### *Showing Methyl Bromide the Way Out in Fiji*

In the first meeting of its kind on Fiji, all the stakeholder groups that influence MB imports and uses in the country met in the capital, Suva, on 27 May to brainstorm ideas on how to phase out MB without negatively impacting the country's economy. Methyl bromide importers, fumigators, government officials, representatives from Chambers of Commerce and other interest groups attended the meeting, which the Government viewed as a means to consider the potential scope for an accelerated MB phase-out process to meet the country's Montreal Protocol commitments.

Though Fiji's consumption of this ODS is low (less than one ODP tonne in 2002), phasing out this chemical will require careful planning. The meeting agreed on the need for more comprehensive retrieval of data on MB use to determine accurate consumption as a basis for a phase-out plan, as well as to

boost enforcement of the permit system and enable a code of good practice for fumigators to be spelt out. Participants also stressed the need for a broader awareness raising campaign tailored to particular sectors or sub-sectors.

They decided that a national MB phase-out strategy should be prepared and developed as a short and medium-term priority, and resolved to establish a National Methyl Bromide Consultative Group to steer the country's MB phase-out activities. Experts from MBTOC and Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) provided technical advice and assistance during the event. CAP will provide ongoing support to the country to support the actions agreed upon during the meeting.

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## Europe and Central Asia

### *Europe and Central Asia Join Hands for Coordinated Action*

Throughout the centuries Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a crossroads where Orient and Occident meet to exchange goods, traditions and knowledge and to mix cultures. In the last week of May, this country welcomed Government representatives of 12 European nations that came to Sarajevo to exchange their experiences and approaches to advancing ozone layer protection. This second meeting of the Regional Ozone Network for Europe and Central Asia under Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP). It was organised by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina and UNEP DTIE in co-operation with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe. The member countries of the Network are scattered throughout the Pan-European region. Most of them border on developed countries and countries with economies in transition operating under Article 2 of the Montreal Protocol. This specific geopolitical situation dictates the need for the Network to join forces with other countries of the region to tackle issues of common concern. Boosting regional cooperation therefore came high on the agenda at Sarajevo and tied together all topics for discussion. Participation by Network countries in advisory, technical and decision-making

bodies under the Protocol was another priority issue.

A blend of expertise and experience in all aspects of implementation of the Montreal Protocol has been accumulated in some Network countries. Several are well ahead of the approved ODS phase-out schedule, while some others are at the early stages of implementation or just about to launch their national phase-out plans. This diversity prompted the Network to adopt an innovative 'contact group' approach to provide a direct country-to-country assistance to those members facing immediate and long-term compliance challenges. This approach was first tested in March this year in Albania and then applied during the contact groups' consultations conducted at the margins of the Sarajevo meeting. It proved instrumental in searching for solutions to technical problems of countries in non-compliance. It also helped the Implementing Agencies better coordinate their efforts and target their compliance support. The merits of the 'contact group' approach will further be examined and refined during group meetings scheduled for the second half of 2004.

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### *Awareness Campaign Helps Macedonia Say Goodbye to Halons*

An energetic anti-halon awareness campaign conducted in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on national TV, radio and in the press for over seven years has played a catalysing role in ridding the country's fire protection sector of halon-based fire-fighting systems and equipment. The campaign also involved seminars, round tables and workshops that brought into the picture all the country's stakeholders – including fire-fighters, fire protection authorities and potential halon consumers such as banks, post, telecommunications and companies dealing with fire protection.

An inaugural national workshop on halon alternatives was held in

1998 and since then there has been no request to import halons into Macedonia. The first test came shortly afterwards, when tenders were invited for a new fire-fighting system for the telecommunications provider. The bidding documents required that any new system proposed should be based on ozone-friendly substances. A company offering FM-250® won the bid, paving the way for installation of seven similar systems around the country. In 2002 the Multilateral Fund's Executive Committee approved a Halon Management Plan for FYR Macedonia and implementation began in 2003.

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### *How Industry Helped Hungary Drop Methyl Bromide Use in Tobacco Seedlings*

Hungary successfully phased out MB use on tobacco seedlings, the country's Ministry of Environment and Water reports. The main driving force behind this advance was the international tobacco industry's preference for discontinuing methyl bromide treatment. Trials were conducted with floating beds, sand beds and chemical control methods for treating soil in which tobacco seedlings are raised. The floating bed

method was found most suitable. Nearly US\$ 1.33 millions was invested in these trials and in phase-out activities that reduced MB use by 5 to 8 tonnes a year over four years. About half the cost was covered by grant support from the Tobacco Product Council.

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## Latin America and the Caribbean

### *Stakeholders Lead the Way to Refrigerant Reforms in Chile*

The Government of Chile's National Refrigerant Management Plan (RMP) was devised as a way for the country's National Commission for Environment (CONAMA), working in association with Environment Canada and UNEP, to cut back the 200 tonnes (54 per cent) of Chile's CFC imports that were destined for the refrigeration and air conditioning service sector in 2002. The Plan has also brought fringe benefits, according to Chile's National Ozone Officer, Jorge Leiva, thanks to stakeholder participation in its design. The involvement of many different sectors and interest groups, in and outside industry, has helped to trigger political support and action, as well as to unite previously separated or competing groups behind a shared agenda, and to raise the profile of a sector that formerly lacked recognition and status. A National Advisory Committee (NAC) was set up to brief CONAMA on needs and challenges specific to Chile and on the service sector's vision of how the country should handle Montreal Protocol issues. The NAC also helped identify end-users and technicians involved in CFC use. The resulting Plan's provisions range from training and capacity-building to legislating

for import controls, stimulating public awareness and introducing good recovery and recycling practices for CFCs across the sector. It also calls for appropriate modules to be included in University and Technical School syllabuses. Thanks to NAC involvement, Chile's Association of Refrigeration and Air Conditioning has grown in membership, while the country's Technical Schools have gained in terms of student numbers and influence within the trade. They have also taken advantage of opportunities to upgrade equipment, tools and human resources.

CONAMA has brought NAC together with the national Customs Service and the Ministry of Health to analyze regulations that apply to ODS. On the political front, service sector groups have subsequently sought interviews with Parliamentary representatives to lobby for specific legislation to regulate CFC use. Leiva reports that Chile aims to maintain this 'win-win' process after the RMP term is up, as a sustainable way to comply with the country's Montreal Protocol requirements.

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## Suriname's Youngsters Tackle Poster Design Challenge to Raise Ozone Awareness

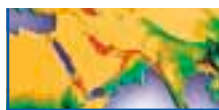
As part of a Country Programme and Refrigerant Management Plan coordinated by the National Institute for Environment and Development in Suriname (NIMOS), a national ozone design competition for youngsters from nine to sixteen years old was organized in association with UNEP between 21 July and 22 August 2003. The aim of the contest was to help raise public awareness in all age-groups of the importance of protecting the ozone layer. Entry forms and background information were distributed countrywide and the event was promoted through a press launch, newspaper adver-

tisements, TV talkshows and radio programmes. Some 300 designs were submitted by the nation's children, competing for cash prizes worth between US\$100 and US\$250. All participants received posters, CDs, books and other awareness materials made available by UNEP. The four winning designs, printed as posters, went on general distribution through schools and public institutions in February 2004 after an official launch by the Minister of Labour, Technological Development and Environment.

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Winning entries for the drawing competition in Suriname



## West Asia

### Tough Measures to Curb Illegal ODS Trade : Regional Strategy

A Regional Workshop on Means of Combating Illegal Trade in Ozone Depleting Substances were discussed in Damascus, Syria from 7 to 9 December 2003. Organized by the Compliance Assistance Programme of the Regional Office for West Asia (CAP/ROWA) and hosted by the Ministry of Local Administration and Environment of the Syrian Arab Republic, the meeting brought together delegations from Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Yemen and representatives of the Palestinian National Authority. Also participating were representatives of United Nations bodies, the League of Arab States (LAS), the Regional Office for the Exchange of Customs Information, the World Customs Organization (WCO), bilateral agencies, NGOs and various other official and observer groups.

Among topics discussed were fraudulent means used in illegal trade and how reduce continuing flow of cheap ODS and ODS-based products and equipment around the region. All Parties were urged to tighten up compliance conditions for ODS-producing countries and countries in the region were offered guidance on regulating illegal trade. Recommendations arising from these and from other workshop discussions urged CAP to :

- Work with the WCO to provide countries with its latest rules and to ask the Regional Office for the Exchange of Customs Information to include ODS monitoring in its regular updates;
  - Ask the Secretariat of the LAS to involve the West Asia Regional Network in meetings on relevant customs issues, and to invite LAS officials to participate in relevant CAP/ROWA activities, to ensure reciprocity;
  - Maintain links with the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for the purpose of controlling trade in ODS among the GCC countries;
  - Explore possible means of support for the Palestinian National Authority.
- The meeting also stressed the importance of Decision XIV/7 on monitoring trade in ODS and preventing illegal trade. Countries were urged to give priority to implementing this decision, and to notify the Regional Network and UNEP/DTIE of national progress.

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### Kuwait Helps Customs Officers Means to Stamp out Illegal Trade

From 13-14 April 2004, Kuwait's Environmental Protection Agency, which provides the country's National Ozone Unit (NOU), pooled resources with the country's General Customs Affairs Council in a move to equip Kuwait's customs officers with the skills and knowledge needed to curb illegal trade in ODS. The Kuwait College of Applied Science also provided technical support related to air conditioning and refrigeration. This training event was the second part of a project supported by the Multilateral Fund and organized with support from the regional team of UNEP's CAP. Under the same project, the country's customs training staff were previously instructed in the ODS training methodology developed by UNEP. This time around, the same trainers applied what they learned to training 27 out of Kuwait's 300 customs line officers. The officers ended up with a wider understanding of

the Montreal Protocol, the mechanics and methods of ODS trade, and the problem of illegal commerce. They also gained skills required to use ODS analyzers effectively. Results exceeded expectations and the knowledge gained was soon applied to real effect. Trainees identified cylinders containing CFC-12 that were under customs custody at the time and which were subsequently re-exported as they were found not to have prior permit to import. These results show how training can result directly in actions to support compliance. The NOU is arranging regular weekly follow-up meetings for the trainers to review information and attend lectures. The EPA expects the second phase of training for customs line officers to be completed by the beginning of 2005.

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# >> SPOTLIGHT ON TAJIKISTAN



Abdukrim Kurbanov, Vice Minister,  
Ministry of Environment, Tajikistan

Ratification of the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol by the Government of Tajikistan prompted the country's President to set up a Task Force to develop a National Programme for protecting the ozone layer. Vice Minister Abdukarim Kurbanov, who was appointed National Coordinator for implementing this programme, answers questions from OzonAction Newsletter about his country's progress and prospects.

## *Q. How was the National Programme developed?*

A. It was developed by local personnel with the assistance of international experts. I want to give special thanks to Ms Aneta Kalnieva (UNEP) and Dr Adham Khalil (UNDP) for their support and valuable inputs in this respect. The draft programme was approved by the Government and subsequently by the Global Environment Facility within the agreed deadlines. Activities under the programme have so far been on schedule. The National Ozone Centre (NOC) is dedicated to the National Programme's full implementation and is helping to

organize awareness raising seminars, training of technicians in the refrigeration servicing sector and retrofitting of refrigeration plant.

## *Q. What are the main achievements in terms of implementing the National Programme?*

A. One of our most successful activities has been raising awareness of the public at large of the need to protect the ozone layer. NOC is proud of its comprehensive awareness raising campaign, which covers all regions of the country. Another solid achievement has been in various areas of training: training of technicians in recycling and recovery methods, training of trainers for follow-up, training of customs officers to help combat illegal trade in ODS, and training of trainers in good practices in refrigeration for the further training of technicians in the refrigeration servicing sector. On the legislative front, the Government of Tajikistan has issued a Decree on a state licensing system for import, handling and use of ODS and ODS-containing products, which will greatly aid future implementation efforts.

## *Q. How was Ozone Day celebrated in Tajikistan?*

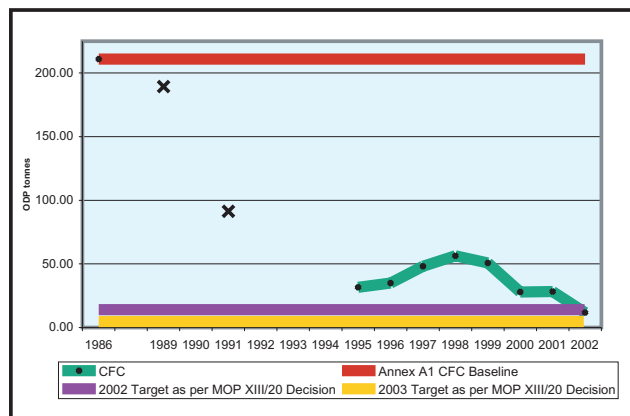
A. Celebrations were organized in many regions of the country under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment, including festivities at servicing workshops and production plants, meetings at regional Committees of the Environment, and lectures at schools and universities. A special issue of the national newsletter with statement by the Minister of the Environment and various articles drafted by NOC staff was printed and widely distributed. A special poster on ozone was also prepared (see right). The National Ozone Coordinator and other NOC staff addressed the public on national TV and radio.

## *Q. What are the main obstacles to implementing the Montreal Protocol in Tajikistan?*

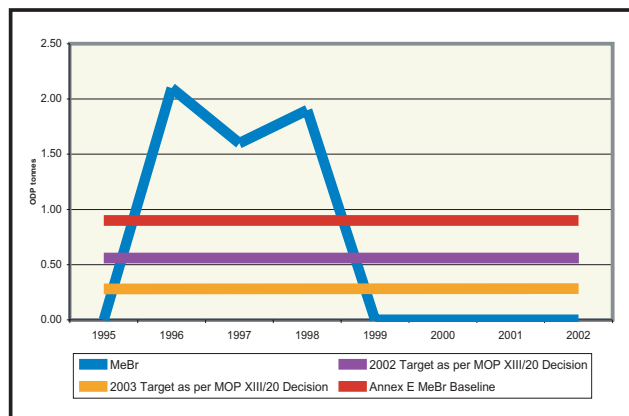
A. Illegal trade of ODS is a growing concern for Tajikistan as well as for other countries of Central Asia. All round the region one can easily find ODS and ODS-containing products illegally imported from China, the Russian Federation and India. Better border controls, effective legislation and regional customs cooperation are indispensable if we are to get on top of smuggling of ODS in Central Asia. We hope UNEP and other international organizations will help us and our neighbours to develop and to put into operation a regional strategy to combat illegal trade.



Trend in CFC consumption in Tajikistan



Trend in MB consumption in Tajikistan



## &gt;&gt; SPECIAL FEATURE

**MBTOC CO-CHAIRS ASSESS THE IMPACT OF THE EMOP**

Nahum Marban Mendoza (left) and Jonathan Banks, Co-chairs of UNEP Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee.

*OAN: Knowing that methyl bromide has an ODP of only 0.6 and very short atmospheric life time, why is its phase-out so important for the success of the Montreal Protocol?*

NMM: The phrase that might sum up the answer best, is 'the sooner, the better' meaning that although MB has this very short period of life – under 2 years – in the atmosphere, an ODP amount of 0.6 is very high by any standard and something to take very seriously. So if we manage to phase it out very soon the impact on the environment will be very quickly erased, too.

JB: That's right, it is very important to go quickly on this because the ozone layer is at a critical stage. It's very damaged for the moment and those products to have a short half life give instant responses compare to those with a long half life. You don't see it mending quickly if you concentrate mainly on those. And looking at concentrations in the upper atmosphere following MB phase-out, I can foresee a great success.

*OAN: In your view, what was the main outcome of the EMOP?*

JB: To my mind, the single most important outcome was that the Parties reaffirmed their commitment to phase out MB. It's the first Extraordinary Meeting ever to be held, that speaks volumes for the importance of MB. Now we have gone through that process, and come out the

other side of it agreeing to proceed with phasing out MB. Exemptions we expected; the Protocol itself provides for them. I believe that the key message was that we are on track to phase out MB as one of the critical ODS.

It has been a very difficult process, very much a learning process, but we hope it will lead to much more rapid consideration of critical use nominations in the future and much better efforts on behalf of the Parties so they will perhaps understand more about the process. Which is of course their process. And MBTOC is continuing to learn through the same process too. It's always difficult to satisfy all the Parties because some Parties are able to go faster on phase-out than others, it's all about local circumstances. After EMOP at least satisfaction was expressed by all and we can continue to move forward.

*OAN: In your view, what are the next steps to convince Parties and users of the environmental, economic and technical feasibility of MB alternatives?*

NMM: I believe that there is a chance for non-chemical alternatives right now to replace MB use; but that requires registrations. Then after registration there is a lack of time for adoption of those alternatives. So we have observed that the lack of registrations or legal problems with alternatives can frequently block their adoption. I hope improving registrations will produce a faster phase out of MB. But those things are not coming by magic. It requires effort from the manufacturing sector, from technical people, from universities, agencies, facilitators, everybody has to be involved in that mechanism for teaching, educating, pushing the people to adopt the new alternatives.

*OAN: So what about economic side?*

NMM: The economic side is always tied to any alternative. No alternative has any chance if it is not economically feasible. They work together, it can be the best solution technically but if it's not cost-effective nobody is going to use it.

*OAN: What role can capacity building, awareness and training play in assisting Parties meet their methyl bromide compliance commitments in the new post-EMOP climate?*

JB: A post-EMOP climate means 'when am I going forward with phase-out?' It's been, just like a little extra step, but a very important one. In any of these things where you have an alternative and it's not an established alternative, you have an educational problem. Whether it's the farmers themselves, or the bank managers because these are part of the process in developed countries or the applicators because all industries have to apply alternatives; all those people have to go through an programme, call it education or call it awareness. One of the things we find as we go around is that still people are not really aware of the damage MB is doing to the ozone layer and why it is that you need alternatives. So at ground level there is a need for further awareness. Training is vital. If you are trying to get an alternative up and running you really do need training in its use.

One of the problems is that alternatives have been there long time but their use has not been optimized. Compare MB, which is in a sense quite easy to use with an alternative pesticide like metam sodium which is sometimes used less well. If you can switch to a better or easier application method, maybe you can improve the efficiency of your existing alternative so that users accept it as comparable with MB. There is also a question of identifying 'champions': a whole production industry and a whole infrastructure behind it supports MB. It would be nice to have champions for the alternatives identify themselves, too. In a free market system without tax breaks or some such inducement the only way to go forward is to go out there and sell it not just in terms of price but sell it so everyone is convinced this is the product everybody wants.

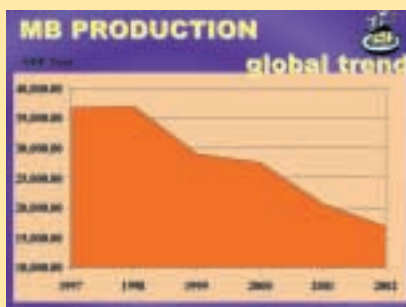
 See the video of this interview on the Ozonaction web site at [www.uneptie.org/ozonaction](http://www.uneptie.org/ozonaction)



## Critical Use Exemptions for Methyl Bromide (MB): a Headline Issue at Montreal EMOP

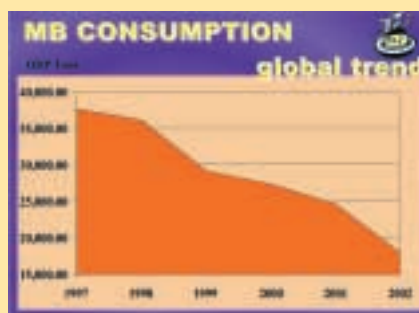


An Extraordinary Meeting of the Parties (EMOP) to the Montreal Protocol took place in Montreal, Canada from 24 to 26 March 2004. The Meeting adopted five decisions including the most important one on 'critical use' exemptions (CUEs) to rules for limiting MB production for 2005. Exemptions were approved, subject to certain conditions, for Australia (145 tonnes), Belgium (47 tonnes), Canada (55 tonnes), France (407 tonnes), Greece (186 tonnes), Italy (2,133 tonnes), Japan (284 tonnes), Portugal (50 tonnes), Spain (1,059 tonnes), United Kingdom (128 tonnes) and the United States (7,659 tonnes). The Parties also agreed to consider a related issue of multi-year CUEs including the elaboration of criteria and methodology for authorising such exemptions, by including a proposal on the agenda of the 16th Meeting of the Parties, in November 2004.



The Parties also approved a decision on conditions for granting and reporting CUEs for MB. Under this decision, any Party granted a CUE will have to submit (among other things) information to the Ozone Secretariat on available alternatives to MB by February 2005, a national management strategy for MB by February 2006 and from January

2007 (for review- ing MBTOC's working procedures and mandate as they relate to the evaluation of nominations for critical use exemptions. This Group will meet for three days in July immediately preceding (and will report its findings to) the 24th session of the Open-ended Working Group of the Parties.



Two further decisions addressed concerns of developing countries. One dealt with an adjustment of the Montreal Protocol proposed by the European Community, calling on developing countries to introduce further interim MB reductions between 2005 and 2015. The Meeting decided to keep the proposal under review and consider it again, ideally by not later than 2006. The other decision addressed the issue of voluntary commitments by developing countries to accelerate the phase-out of MB. The Meeting requested the Executive Committee (ExCom) of the Multilateral Fund to adopt a flexible approach whenever a Party that has concluded agreements with the Fund on early phase-out, fails to meet a reduction step specified in the agreement. ExCom could exercise such flexibility by, for example, prolonging the final reduction step, though not beyond 2015. It could also flow the schedule of

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