



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

For use of the media only;
not an official document.

PRESS RELEASE

Developed countries to cut levels of ozone-depleting Methyl bromide in 2006

Montreal, 1 July 2005 – The 189 member governments of the Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer have finalized an agreement under which developed countries will reduce their use of Methyl bromide in 2006 compared to 2005.

Used as a fumigant for high-value crops, Methyl bromide damages the Earth's protective ozone shield. Developed countries have agreed to phase-out their controlled uses of the substance completely by 1 January 2005.

Under the Protocol, however, governments can request temporary exemptions to their phase-out deadline when there are no technically or economically feasible alternatives.

"The importance of today's decision is that it maintains the downward trend in Methyl bromide use by developed countries," said Executive Director Klaus Toepfer of the United Nations Environment Programme, under whose auspices the Protocol was negotiated.

"This should send a positive signal to farmers and other users of Methyl bromide that alternatives are increasingly available and should be adopted as quickly as possible. It should also encourage developing countries to stay on track with their own efforts to phase-out this harmful substance," he said.

As a result of today's decision, developed countries will receive exemptions totalling 13,014 metric tonnes for 2006; in addition, a recommendation for approving another 269 tonnes has been forwarded to a December meeting for final decision. This compares with a total of 16,050 tonnes of exemptions received for 2005, representing close to a 20% decline.

Meanwhile, the consumption of Methyl bromide by developing countries has declined from a peak of 18,140 tonnes in 1998 to 11,858 tonnes in 2003. These countries have a 2015 deadline for a total phase-out.

The next Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol will be held in Dakar from 12 – 16 December. In addition to the supplementary tonnes for 2006 cited above, this meeting will consider requests for Methyl bromide exemptions for the year 2007 as well as the

level of funding that should be made available in 2006-2008 to enable developing countries to continue complying with their numerous reduction obligations.

Note to journalists: For more information, please contact conference press officer Michael Williams at +41-79-409-1528 or michael.williams@unep.ch or UNEP Spokesman Nick Nuttall at +254-2-62-3084, +254-733-632755 (cell) or nick.nuttall@unep.org. Official documents are posted at www.unep.org/ozone/.