

Information Note -

Smugglers Watch Out: Illegal Trade in ODS

Bangkok, 10 November 2010. A side event of MOP 22 on illegal trade in ODS: Actions to Combat Smuggling and Challenges Ahead was organized by UNEP OzonAction in Bangkok, Thailand with 50 participants from governments, industry, international organizations and NGOs.

Ms. Fionnuala Walravens, Environmental Investigation Agency assessed the risk of illegal trade in ODS, and appealed countries to give more attentions to illegal trade in HCFCs. She highlighted that smugglers are using the same tricks which they used for CFCs to smuggle HCFCs. The publication of EIA assessment will be launched during the virtual tour from Bangkok to Cancun and beyond (www.unep.org/ozonaction/virtualtour)

Mr. Rajendra Shende, UNEP DTIE presented the Europe Central Asia (ECA) Ozone Protection Award to Mr. Alexandros Kiriazis (European Commission) in recognition of his excellent work in combating illegal trade in ozone depleting substances.

Mr. Zhao Jie, Deputy Head of WCO Regional Intelligence Liaison Office (RILO) for Asia and the Pacific introduced a confidential coordinated global customs operational project targeting illegal trade in ODS called "Sky Hole Patching II" which has been coordinated between OzonAction and the World Customs Organization (WCO). He briefed that 80 Customs Administrations in both Article 5 and non-Article 5 countries covering 278 Seaports, Land Borders and Airports have joined the project. 26 seizures, including 4,327 cylinders (64 tons) ODS, 668 equipment containing ODS were reported during May to November 2010. He stressed that new trafficking trends have emerged in many countries, and vigilance and effective enforcement actions are still needed to put an end of illegal trade.

Mr. Ruperto DeJesus, UNEP DTIE introduced the e-learning Module on Montreal Protocol/ODS, which was developed in collaboration with the World Customs Organization in order to provide updated customs training on the Montreal Protocol. The e-learning module is hosted in the WCO e-learning platform and is now available in English while the French, Spanish, and Russian versions are currently in development. Countries like Malaysia requested the assistance of UNEP in adaptation the module into local languages. UNEP will coordinate this issue with the WCO.

Ms. Kakuko Nagatani, UNEP DTIE introduced the implementation of the Informal Prior Informed Consent for ODS control (iPIC), a voluntary mechanism that strengthen the implementation of the national licensing systems for ODS import and export. She encouraged more countries to make more proactive use of the mechanism to increase the effectiveness of their licensing system as well as to reduce the loop hole that may exist still in control of ODS transboundary movements.

The representative Basel Convention Secretariat attended the event and appealed cooperation between other environmental agreements. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime also presented the event and briefed the project PATROL (Partnership on Combating Transnational Crime through Regional Organized Law Enforcement).

Contact:

UNEP DTIE OzonAction Branch OzonAction@unep.org