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COMMISSION ON PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES

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Written reports from relevant international organizations - Report by the Ozone Secretariat for the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer

Agenda item 14.3

Prepared by the Ozone Secretariat

English only

1. Under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, issues related to the use of methyl bromide (MB) are dealt with by the Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee (MBTOC), which is one of the Protocol's Technical Options Committees of the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel (TEAP). Through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the Ozone Secretariat[1] and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) in 2012, MBTOC has been providing the Convention with information and support for over five years. The intent of this MOU is to "*Promote and facilitate collaboration between the Montreal Protocol and the IPPC through joint participation of technical experts in the technical panels and committees of both treaties, such as the Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee, the Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments and the Expert Working Group on Alternatives to Methyl Bromide, to enhance communication and advice consistent with the aims of both agreements*."

[1] ozone.unep.org

2. The Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee (MBTOC) of the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel under the Montreal Protocol has finalized its 2018 Quadrennial Assessment Report, updating parties about the latest developments on the phase-out of methyl bromide (MB). The report highlights that 99 per cent of the reported controlled uses of MB for non-quarantine and pre-shipment (non-QPS) purposes have been phased out. It also reports on QPS uses, which are presently exempt from controls under the Montreal Protocol, and on technically and economically feasible alternatives for QPS uses of MB. It also shows trends in methyl bromide production and consumption in both Article 5 (developing) and non-Article 5 (developed) parties and estimated levels of emissions of MB to the atmosphere, together with strategies to reduce those emissions.

3. Several parties have made significant advances in reduction and even phase-out of MB for some QPS applications. In 2010, the European Union phased out all uses of MB, New Zealand has recently implemented a policy of no emissions from all QPS uses of MB and the State of North Carolina in the United States of America has also imposed recapture technologies.

4. The report shows that global production of methyl bromide for QPS purposes in 2017 was 10,217 tonnes, increasing by about 15 per cent from the previous year. Production occurs in five parties: China, India, Israel, Japan and USA.

5. In 2017, reported QPS consumption was approximately 10,000 tonnes, 70 times larger than controlled consumption. Despite a number of parties (Brazil, European Union, Indonesia, Japan, United States of America) substantially reducing consumption of MB by over 50 to 100 per cent (approximately 3,500 tonnes in total) for QPS, other countries have increased consumption dramatically and this has offset any gains. Consequently, the level of consumption globally has remained at over 10,000 tonnes for the last twenty years.

6. Overall, consumption in Article 5 Parties has trended upward over the past 15 years, whereas consumption in non-Article 5 Parties has exhibited a downward trend. On a regional basis, Asian countries accounted for 55 per cent of global QPS consumption.

7. While there remain some data gaps and uncertainties, information supplied by the Parties allowed MBTOC to estimate that five uses consumed more than 80 per cent of the methyl bromide used for QPS in 2017: 1) Sawn timber and wood packaging material (ISPM-15); 2) Grains and similar foodstuffs; 3) Pre-plant soils use; 4) Logs; and 5) Fresh fruit and vegetables. On the basis of these estimates and currently available technologies to replace methyl bromide for QPS, MBTOC has estimated that between 30 and 45 per cent of the MB used for QPS purposes could be replaced with immediately available alternatives.

8. In 2017, QPS use of MB contributed over 97 per cent of the global emissions of methyl bromide, which is approximately 34 times greater than the emissions from the consumption for critical uses controlled under the Montreal Protocol. Control of these emissions is the biggest immediate gain that can be made under the Montreal Protocol to the reduction of ODS substances in the stratosphere. Parties who have reduced emissions of MB for QPS have either regulations which speed up the uptake of alternatives or are adopting recapture technologies.

9. Accurate reporting and classification of use is still a major problem. Some parties continue to express concerns over difficulties in interpreting the categories of MB uses between controlled and exempted uses and some of the QPS reported use appears to wrongly reported. MBTOC also still has difficulty in determining the actual pests and commodities for which MB is used in QPS and has suggested to parties that they may wish to consider revisiting a means with which parties are better able to obtain and report this information.

10. MBTOC welcomes any information that can be provided on successful alternatives which can replace MB and suggests any experts interested in joining MBTOC to approach the Ozone Secretariat.