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Contact:
Alexander von Bismarck
saschavonbismarck@eia-international.org
+1 202-483-6621
+44 207 354 7960

OZONE-FRIENDLY ALTERNATIVES INTENSIFY GLOBAL WARMING Replacements for CFCs threaten to undo Kyoto's progress

Washington, DC—Emissions of chemicals that are replacements for ozone-layer depleting CFCs threaten to undermine international efforts to stop global warming, according to the new report, *Turning Up the Heat*, by the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA).

Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)—promoted by the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer as ozone-friendly chemicals—are estimated to add the equivalent of 3 billion tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere by 2015.

The report by the EIA shows that the production and use of these chemicals is skyrocketing in China, where EIA's investigations have revealed uncontrolled production and trade of these and other refrigerant gases.

“As it stands, the global warming impact of world HCFCs and HFCs emissions will rival the total greenhouse gas emissions of the entire European Union within ten years,” said Alexander von Bismarck, campaigns director for EIA's Washington, DC office.

These chemicals are up to 10,000 times worse for the climate than carbon dioxide, and according to EIA calculations, their emissions are expected to add two to three times more greenhouse gases to the atmosphere than the Kyoto Protocol is required to reduce.

HCFCs are controlled by the Montreal Protocol, and HFCs by the Kyoto Protocol; consequently, jurisdictional concerns have caused this issue to fall by the wayside. The emissions of HCFCs and HFCs are predicted to skyrocket in the next 20 years, as countries such as China and India increase production to satisfy US and world demands.

“These chemicals are trapped between treaties. The Montreal Protocol needs to immediately take responsibility, phase out these chemicals, and promote climate friendly alternatives,” concluded von Bismarck.

The EIA report called on the Montreal Protocol and its member countries to accelerate the phase out of HCFCs and fund the promotion of alternatives. Climate and ozone friendly refrigerants, for uses such as home air-conditioning, are already available in Europe but are in limited use globally.

Editor’s Notes:

- EIA is an independent, non-governmental organization, based in Washington, DC, and London, committed to investigating and exposing environmental crimes around the world.
- In May 2006, the US Environmental Protection Agency awarded EIA the Stratospheric Ozone Protection Award for its work in combating the illegal trade in ozone-depleting chemicals.
- The Montreal Protocol was agreed on January 1, 1987, and is now ratified by 188 countries. Under the Montreal Protocol and its amendments, ozone-depleting substances are to be reduced and eliminated through the development of alternatives.
- The Kyoto Protocol is an amendment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Countries that ratified it have agreed to reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases through emissions trading.

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