

## Adjustments/amendments to the Montreal Protocol

At the 11th Meeting of Parties to the Montreal Protocol held from 29 November to 3 December 1999 at Beijing, China, several amendments to the Montreal Protocol were proposed. Some of these include:

- With regard to methyl bromide quarantine and pre-shipment uses, the Community noted, from the April 1999 report of the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel, that 22 per cent of the current global use of methyl bromide was for quarantine and pre-shipment applications, entirely outside the Protocol's control measures. With evidence that the definitions of quarantine and pre-shipment adopted in decisions VI/11 and VII/5 were not widely understood or consistently applied, the blanket exemption for quarantine and pre-shipment represented a potential loophole in the Protocol's control measures which could delay the recovery of the ozone layer.
- Accordingly, the European Community proposed that, for each 12-month period commencing on a date to be stipulated, the calculated levels of production and consumption of controlled substances in Annex E for quarantine and pre-shipment applications should not exceed the average of a country's annual calculated levels of production and consumption, respectively, for those applications for the period 1995-1998 inclusive. Acceptance of a freeze would not only constitute a control measure but would also open up the possibility of Multilateral Fund financing of projects for alternatives to methyl bromide in quarantine and pre-shipment.
- On the question of methyl bromide use for quarantine and pre-shipment, some representatives agreed that there was a potential loophole which might delay the recovery of the ozone layer, and supported the proposal. Others, however, considered that alterations to the current arrangements were not appropriate, as flexibility was needed to deal with possible increased infestations or increased trade, or to avoid possible negative impacts on countries' trade, particularly trade with non-Article 5 countries, or the danger of introducing exotic pests. Some representatives pointed out that the unconditional exemption for quarantine and pre-shipment was to be maintained until viable alternatives to methyl bromide were in existence. A number of representatives said that there was a need for intensive research into such alternatives, while others insisted that there were in fact proven alternatives. In particular, a number of representatives found it premature to discuss extending restrictions to quarantine and pre-shipment applications when only 101 out of 168 Parties had so far ratified the Copenhagen Amendment, and pointed out that the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel had not been able to determine the economic feasibility of the substances identified as technical alternatives to methyl bromide. Others called for greater amounts of Multilateral Fund resources to be made available for retrofitting of equipment using methyl bromide. While an observer, speaking on behalf of a group of environmental non-governmental organizations called for an increase in the accuracy of the data reported, one representative called for further study of the whole issue.

- Some representatives considered that mandatory reporting would be an important step towards freezing quantities of methyl bromide used, while others favoured the proposal as a way to prevent abuse of the quarantine and pre-shipment exemption. Some representatives pointed out that they had already been following that procedure on a voluntary basis, but others said that they had no mechanism for such reporting.
- Some representatives were in favour of reporting uses of methyl bromide for quarantine separately from those for pre-shipment, while several others felt that they would have difficulty in doing so.

(Eleventh Meeting of Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, Beijing, China, 29 November-3 December 1999)

