

Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)

Proposals under Discussion

HFCs are a 'low-hanging fruit' in the battle to prevent dangerous climate change. Being extremely potent and short-lived greenhouse gases, their elimination would have an immediate and positive effect on the global climate. Yet their growing emissions make them a rapidly increasing threat. The most recent peer-reviewed science has shown that if we do everything to reduce global CO₂ emissions to keep global temperatures below 2°C but do nothing about HFCs, they will be responsible for the equivalent of 28-45% of CO₂ emissions by 2050.¹

The potential for large and early climate benefits is currently recognised in the following proposals calling for action on HFCs. While Greenpeace welcomes the recognition of HFCs as a growing climate threat and a 'low-hanging fruit', we believe that none of these proposals are ambitious enough.

Greenpeace's demands for the international regulation of HFCs are the following:

- A rapid reduction in the current use of HFCs with a view to a global phase-out by 2020. This will ensure that developing countries leapfrog HFCs and drive the wider market penetration of natural refrigerants and not-in-kind alternatives across all sectors.
- For the Montreal Protocol to immediately adopt a "presumption against HFCs" policy, which states that "HFCs must not be used in any new or retrofit applications where there are technologically proven, safe, efficient and lower GWP not-in-kind alternative technologies available."²
- For the UNFCCC to set an ambition level for a HFC phase-out (namely, 100% by 2020) and play an active role in the accounting of HFC emissions and the funding of HFC phase-out measures. Industrialised countries should lead the funding of such measures given their funding of the CFC and HCFC phase-outs.
- A joint TEAP/IPCC report looking at the current and future growth of HFC production, consumption and emission as well as a comprehensive review of HFC-free alternatives.

North American Proposal

The North American Proposal calls for a HFC phase-down under the Montreal Protocol. It sets a reduction schedule in the combined production and consumption of HFCs and HCFCs of 85% by 2033 in industrialised countries and 2043 in developing countries.

This proposal is weak and lacks ambition in terms of timing and baselines:

- The phase-down schedule should be a phase-out schedule and is nowhere near fast enough – there must be a global phase-out of HFCs by 2020.
- HFCs must not be accepted as yet another temporary replacement to CFCs in Article 5 (developing) countries of the Montreal Protocol. There are fluorocarbon free alternatives for all applications. There should be no grace period for developing countries in phasing-down HFCs as detailed in Article 5, paragraph 8 qua, for such a grace period will simply encourage the massive uptake of HFCs in developing countries. An HFC phase-out schedule should be global and simultaneous in order to maximise its climate benefits and drive market penetration of natural refrigerants rather than in-kind alternatives.

¹ Velders et al. (2009) *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, vol. 106 no. 27 p.10949

² The term 'not-in-kind alternatives' (NIKA) refers to all cooling and insulation technologies that operate without fluorinated gases.

- The phase-down schedule irrationally combines HFC *and* HCFC consumption in its baseline. Under this inflated and combined HFC/HCFC baseline, Greenpeace has calculated that **the United States would not have to take any action to reduce its HFC consumption before 2022**. Considering that carbon emissions have to peak in 2015, action on HFCs must be taken immediately.
- As detailed in the Mauritius/Micronesia amendment (see below) there should be an amendment to Article 10 of the Montreal Protocol mandating the Multilateral Fund to adopt a presumption against HFCs policy. Such a policy must be implemented before or in tandem with a HFC phase-out schedule.
- Greenpeace believes that any action taken by the Montreal Protocol outside its current remit should be subject to UNFCCC approval.

Micronesia/Mauritius Proposal

The Micronesia/Mauritius amendment also calls for a HFC phase-down under the Montreal Protocol. It sets reduction targets of 90% of HFC production and consumption in industrialised countries by 2030 and 2040 in developing countries.

- While the phase-down schedule is more ambitious than the North American Proposal, it is still not ambitious enough – we need a global HFC phase-out by 2020 in order to guarantee that developing countries leapfrog HFCs and ensure the rapid, wide market penetration of natural refrigerants and not-in-kind alternatives.
- There should be no grace period for Article 5 countries (see above)
- Greenpeace supports the amended Article 10(11) mandating the Multilateral Fund to adopt a presumption against HFCs policy. We believe that this is the first step the Montreal Protocol can and must take to reduce HFC production and consumption. It also represents the most important action the Montreal Protocol can take before COP 15.

EU Proposal

A clause inserted in the Copenhagen Declaration enabling the Montreal Protocol to take steps to control HFC production and consumption would be an important first step of an international HFC phase-out. These measures should not undermine existing provisions under the UNFCCC and its current and future protocols. The EU is proposing such a type of clause and is expected to elaborate on it in Bangkok. There is otherwise no mention of HFCs in the present LCA negotiating text.

- An enabling clause would give much needed legal clarity to the relationship between the UNFCCC and Montreal Protocol frameworks. It would recognise the unique position of HFCs in international environmental law: their regulation requires close cooperation between the UNFCCC and Montreal Protocol frameworks in line with the shared responsibility they both have for their phase-out. Such a clause should include funding proposals for a HFC phase-out.
- We believe that funding for a HFC phase-out should be provided from the public funds that developed countries should contribute to non-forest mitigation action in developing countries (Greenpeace believes this should be at least \$50 billion US dollars a year). A new UNFCCC institution should account for the funds channelled through the Multilateral Fund to support the HFC phase-out in developing countries.
- An enabling clause should also contain sufficiently urgent and binding language. Greenpeace believes that the UNFCCC text must set a specific ambition level (100% phase-out by 2020) in order to send the Montreal Protocol a clear message detailing the intensity of action that must be taken. Otherwise the UNFCCC will have no control of the timing of the HFC phase-out and it will have abdicated a further substantive role in a HFC phase-out.

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