



POLITICAL AGREEMENT REACHED BY MEMBER STATES ON PROPOSAL TO CONTROL AND MONITOR FLUORINATED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: AN IMPORTANT STEP FOR INDUSTRY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Brussels, 14 October, 2004

EFCTC, the European Fluorocarbons Technical Committee (EFCTC), the organisation that represents the fluorocarbon producers in Europe, welcomes the decision by the Environment Council of the EU today to reach a political agreement on the proposal for an EU regulation on fluorinated gases.

“We are pleased that the Council solved the difficult issues of legal base and the list use restrictions”, stated Dr Nick Campbell, Chairman of EFCTC, “but we are concerned that the Council agreed to phase out the use of HFC-134a in mobile air-conditioning systems, when alternatives are still in the development phase and no mass-produced commercial system, that provides demonstrable economic, safety and environmental benefits is yet available.”

EFCTC considers that the decision to adopt a dual legal base (Article 95, covering placing of products on the market and Article 175, covering the environmental aspects) is a reasonable compromise. It should enable the regulation to reach its environmental goals while promoting the free movement of goods and services throughout the Community.

The rejection by the Council of the proposed extension to the list of applications, restricting the use of fluorinated gases, acknowledges that only uses in which emissions cannot be controlled, that are not considered to be vital to society should be banned. In other applications, the regulation should concentrate on the means to ensure containment of emissions. There is indeed sufficient evidence that containment is feasible and already a reality in many cases through technological improvement, monitoring of installations and training of qualified personnel.

Fluorinated gases (F-gases) in particular HFCs, have contributed widely to the success of the Montreal Protocol in protecting the ozone layer. Fluorinated gases are greenhouse gases, but their impact on climate is and will remain limited (less than 3 %) while they contribute to improving the energy efficiency of key applications (refrigeration, air conditioning, thermal insulation) and thus assist countries in meeting their objectives in reducing greenhouse gas emissions under the UN Climate Change Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.

“EFCTC, and the industries that rely on F-gases, support the principle of an EU regulation on Fluorinated gases that controls emissions and concentrates on containment, monitoring and reporting.” said Dr. Campbell, “Yesterday’s political agreement combines ambitious environmental objectives without unfounded restrictions, that would be detrimental not only to the European economy but also to health, safety and to the overall reduction of greenhouse gas emissions”



Following this political agreement by the Environment Council, EFCTC calls on the European Parliament to come to a second reading agreement with the Council and thereby allow the regulation to pass into European law in the shortest possible time.

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