



HFCs contribution to climate change likely to remain below 1% by 2015 notes IPCC Special Report

Brussels, 11 April. Contribution of HFCs to climate change likely to remain below 1% by 2015 notes IPCC Special Report.

EFCTC¹ welcomes the publication of the Summary for Policymakers of the '*Special Report on Safeguarding the Ozone Layer and the Global Climate System*', published today by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel (TEAP) of the Montreal Protocol. The Summary for Policymakers (SPM), approved at the IPCC meeting 6-9th April in Addis Ababa, highlights the importance of HFCs, as replacements to CFCs. It states clearly that whilst atmospheric concentrations of HFCs are rising, their contribution to direct radiative forcing is expected only to be about 1% by 2015, whilst their adoption has contributed to a threefold reduction in the global warming emissions of all halocarbons.

The decreased climate impact of halocarbons associated to HFCs uses

The summary acknowledges the actions taken under the Montreal Protocol, such as the replacement of CFCs, has begun to reduce atmospheric chlorine loading, which is expected to lead to a slow recovery of the ozone layer in the coming decades. Importantly, it recognises that because replacements, including HFCs, generally have lower Global Warming Potentials (GWPs), and because total halocarbon emissions have decreased, their impact on climate change has also been dramatically reduced.

"The report that underpins this summary has been a major undertaking involving many experts from around the world," noted Tim Vink, vice-chairman of EFCTC, "it represents the best state of knowledge on issues related to HFCs and PFCs at the present time."

The benefit of containment

"The summary highlights the improvement made because of CFC replacements such as HFCs and it also notes the benefit of containment during use, and recovery at end of life, to further minimise their impact. Measures such as those proposed by the draft EU F-Gas Regulation, which focus on containment, are supported by this document as an effective means of delivering HFC emission reductions," said Vink.

¹ The European Fluorocarbon Technical Committee



Because of improved containment much of the HFC used in refrigeration and air-conditioning systems is held in equipment and this 'bank' of refrigerant is expected to increase. The Summary for Policymakers takes this improvement into account as part of its statement that HFC contribution to direct radiative forcing in 2015, under Business As Usual, will be about 1%. This gives a clear perspective of the contribution of HFCs towards *reducing* overall global warming.

The importance of energy efficiency

The publication of this important summary confirms to policymakers that energy efficiency and the containment of fluorocarbons should be the main focus. Most notably it highlights that actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions based only on HFCs have a limited impact. The report summary recognises in particular that greenhouse gas emissions related to energy consumption may be reduced significantly for refrigeration and air-conditioning applications, as well as improved insulation using HFCs.

“Besides being profitable, energy efficiency improvements can have a major impact on reducing greenhouse gases emissions, and the whole industry is already working to deliver these improvements using HFCs, achieving much improved efficiencies compared to 5 years ago” adds Vink.

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You can also visit the website: www.fluorocarbons.org

Notes to editors:

1. This IPCC Special Report was developed in response to invitations by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer to prepare a balanced scientific, technical and policy relevant report regarding alternatives to ozone-depleting substances (ODSs) that affect the global climate system. It has been prepared by the IPCC and the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel (TEAP) of the Montreal Protocol.
2. **Figure SPM-2.** Radiative forcing (RF) due to changes in halocarbons from 1750 to 2000 - <http://www.ipcc.ch/press/pr09042005.htm>

