



**Report by the Ozone Secretariat
for the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer**
18th Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM)
(15-19 April 2024)

Introduction

1. Under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, technical advice and assessment on issues related to the use of methyl bromide, a potent ozone-depleting substance, are dealt with by the Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee (MBTOC), which is one of the Protocol's Technical Options Committees of the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel (TEAP). The work of the MBTOC has also involved cooperative efforts with the Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments (TPPT) of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) since 2007.¹ These efforts led to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ozone Secretariat² of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, on behalf of the Secretariat of the IPPC in 2012.

2. The MBTOC responds to requests and tasks assigned by the parties to the Montreal Protocol and has provided advice on issues related to the control of methyl bromide for non-quarantine and preshipment (non-QPS) uses since 1992. Thanks to actions taken by the parties, the phase-out of controlled uses of methyl bromide is now virtually complete, leading to over 85 per cent of the total methyl bromide for all uses (QPS and non-QPS) being phased out globally. As reported by the parties, less than 40 tonnes of methyl bromide are currently used under the critical use exemption for non-QPS soil and domestic commodity uses. This year, the MBTOC assessed what appears to be the last critical use nomination for methyl bromide.

Recent Assessment findings

3. The highlights from the 2022 MBTOC Assessment report³ related to the QPS use of methyl bromide are listed below:

- The annual consumption of methyl bromide for QPS purposes has remained relatively constant over more than 20 years, at around 10,000 tonnes. Seventeen countries use about 94 per cent of the reported QPS consumption and only 55 of 198 parties have reported use of methyl bromide for QPS over the past ten years. Data also shows that in 2022 parties operating under paragraph 1 of Article 5 of the Montreal Protocol (A5 parties) accounted for 61 per cent of the global methyl bromide consumption for QPS purposes (5027 tonnes), up from 57 per cent in 2021; non-A5 Party consumption, at 3099 tonnes was 39 per cent, down from 43 per cent in 2021. According to the MBTOC, alternatives are available for most preshipment uses and, if adopted, these could result in replacing 30-40 per cent of the total methyl bromide for QPS uses (i.e. 3000-4000 tonnes).
- Elimination of emissions from QPS use is the single largest short term gain that could be made to further reducing the equivalent effective stratospheric chlorine (EESC) in the atmosphere

¹ A report on the Montreal Protocol was submitted to the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures at its second meeting (CPM-2), available at: <https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/471/>.

² <https://ozone.unep.org/>.

³ <https://ozone.unep.org/system/files/documents/MBTOC-Assessment-2022.pdf>.

and speeding the recovery of the ozone layer. Complete elimination of emissions from QPS use of methyl bromide, would result in a further significant (i.e., ~10 per cent) and rapid reduction of the present EESC. This is one of the very few measures available to the parties that would result in a rapid reduction of this magnitude. Technical alternatives to both Q and PS purposes are becoming increasingly available, with a range of new chemicals, such as ethane dinitrile and hydrogen cyanide showing good efficacy against many pests. These new chemical alternatives are now becoming registered in an increasing number of countries. Emissions of methyl bromide and some alternatives can also be managed through use of recapture technologies, which are being implemented by some countries.

- Regarding the non-QPS uses of methyl bromide, it is expected that these will be phased out by 2025.

Cooperation areas between the Montreal Protocol and the IPPC

4. As a reminder of past correspondence, at the Second Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM-2) of the IPPC in 2007, the Ozone Secretariat submitted a paper on cooperation and areas of mutual concern between the two agreements. The Parties to the IPPC participating in CPM-2 agreed that the IPPC Secretariat should continue to cooperate and coordinate with the Ozone Secretariat on issues of common concern with a view to identifying and promoting activities that would benefit and enhance the coherence of the two international agreements.⁴ In the areas of issues of common concern, there are several activities that may benefit from collaboration at this time. These are:

- Continued data gathering on quantities of methyl bromide used for QPS by country and the particular sector of use, together with identification of uses for which there are feasible and approved alternatives, and the quantity of methyl bromide that those alternatives could replace, if implemented.
- Identification of those quarantine situations for which methyl bromide fumigation is the only phytosanitary measure specified, and encouragement of development and use of alternatives in these situations.
- In situations where methyl bromide and an alternative are both recommended for a particular quarantine treatment, development of guidance criteria for the non-methyl bromide alternative.
- Specification and promotion of best fumigation practice in quarantine treatments with methyl bromide, with emphasis on more efficient methyl bromide use and minimised emissions, while maintaining phytosanitary effectiveness.
- Encouragement of the use of methyl bromide recapture, recovery and recycling technology, where technically and economically feasible, to reduce emissions of methyl bromide from quarantine treatments without alternatives, until such alternatives are available.
- Promotion of joint participation by experts in technical advisory bodies of the Montreal Protocol and IPPC to enhance communication and advice, consistent with the aims of both agreements.
- Continued collaboration between the secretariats and between the technical bodies of the two international agreements to progress mutual aims.

⁴ https://assets.ippc.int/static/media/files/publications/en/1179929463410_CPM_2_report_1.pdf

Key issues for consideration

5. The review, revision and development of phytosanitary treatments by the TPPT are key processes that influence the adoption of alternatives to methyl bromide for commodities traded under bilateral arrangements. As a key role of the MBTOC is the identification of suitable methyl bromide alternatives, co-operation with the IPPC and the TPPT, in particular, is considered essential in assisting parties with the phase out of methyl bromide for QPS uses.

6. The MoU between the two treaties, which expired in 2017, has been instrumental in promoting cooperation on issues of common concern. The Ozone Secretariat seeks to explore ways to continue and strengthen that cooperation including through the renewal of the MOU.

7. It is also suggested that consideration be given to:

- Promoting and facilitating collaboration between the Montreal Protocol and the IPPC through joint participation of technical experts in the technical panels and committees of both treaties, such as the MBTOC and the TPPT, to enhance communication and exchange of advice, consistent with the aims of both agreements; and
- Exchanging information and documentation with a view to maximizing efficiency and effectiveness in advancing the mutual aims of the treaties, minimizing duplication of effort, and facilitating coordination and consultation among relevant stakeholders at the national and international level.

8. In 2023, the MBTOC provided its response to Decision XXXIV/10 on stocks and quarantine and pre-shipment uses of methyl bromide, adopted by the Thirty-Fourth Meeting of the Parties in 2022, as part of its progress report to the Open-ended Working Group at its forty-fifth meeting.⁵ In doing so, the MBTOC consulted with the IPPC secretariat, in order to provide updated information on current quarantine and pre-shipment uses for which alternatives were available, to ensure parties take into account the IPPC standards and guidelines in their national processes and to consider the potential for uptake of practices to minimize the use of methyl bromide.

9. In response to that decision, and to ensure consistency of information on alternatives to methyl bromide for QPS treatments, the MBTOC considered current ISPMs which are relevant for such uses and their alternatives. Further, because there are instances where confusion seems to persist in what constitutes a QPS treatment, the MBTOC provided clarification and tools that can be used by parties to properly identify these uses of methyl bromide and clearly distinguish them from controlled non-QPS uses.

10. It is anticipated that further continued cooperation with the IPPC will be required to clarify these issues further to the parties.

11. Currently, there are no experts who are both members of the MBTOC and the TPPT. The MBTOC would therefore like to continue to provide an invitation to TPPT qualified technical experts in methyl bromide use for quarantine and related phytosanitary issues to consider participating in the

⁵ <https://ozone.unep.org/meetings/45th-meeting-open-ended-working-group-parties/pre-session-documents> (section 4.2).

MBTOC through the nomination procedure established under the Montreal Protocol. In this regard, the expertise sought by the MBTOC relates to:

- (a) Alternatives to methyl bromide that can be used in quarantine (and pre-shipment) uses globally (in both developed and developing countries); and
- (b) Regulations involved in maintaining phytosanitary/biosecurity standards between and within countries during international trade.

12. The Ozone Secretariat would appreciate receiving suggestions from the IPPC in 2024 on possible ways for strengthening the cooperation between the two treaties to enable the parties to the Montreal Protocol to consider them in 2025.