

**Report by the Ozone Secretariat
for the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer**
19th Session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures (CPM)
(Rome, 17-21 March 2025)

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-QPS (Quarantine and Preshipment) uses since 1992. Thanks to actions taken by the parties, the phase-out of controlled non-QPS 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. In 2024, the MBTOC assessed what appears to be the last Critical Use Nomination for controlled use of methyl bromide, marking a significant milestone in the phase-out process. However, an average of 10,000 tonnes of methyl bromide continue to be used per year, posing a significant threat to the ozone layer.

3. Given that methyl bromide alternatives for QPS uses are available in 30-40 per cent of the cases, replacing methyl bromide in such uses would bring rapid and clear environmental benefits..

Recent news and findings

4. The highlights from the 2024 MBTOC Progress report³ are listed below:

- Global methyl bromide **production** for QPS uses decreased from 8,900 tonnes in 2022 to about 8,000 tonnes in 2023.
- Global annual methyl bromide **consumption** for QPS use has remained relatively constant for more than 20 years at around 10,000 tonnes. Large fluctuations are, however, common in the reported data. Over the last two years, there appears to be a consistent decline in the global consumption from the historic 10,000 tonnes use.
- About 55 out of the 198 parties to the Montreal Protocol have reported use of methyl bromide for QPS over the past ten years, while 17 countries use about 94 per cent of the reported QPS consumption. Available reported data for 2023 also shows that in that year parties operating under paragraph 1 of Article 5 of the Montreal Protocol (A5 parties) accounted for over 65 per

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/TEAP-May2024-Progress-Report.pdf> (Chapter 4).

cent and non A5 parties for 35 per cent of the global methyl bromide consumption for QPS purposes.

- Elimination of emissions of methyl bromide from QPS use is the single largest short-term gain that could be made to further reducing the equivalent effective stratospheric chlorine (EESC) and speeding the recovery of the ozone layer. Complete elimination of emissions of methyl bromide from QPS uses 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.

-Cooperation areas between the Montreal Protocol and the IPPC

5. 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 The following activities are considered to be important areas for collaboration:

- Continued data gathering on quantities of methyl bromide used for QPS by country and particular application, together with identification of uses for which there are feasible and approved alternatives, with quantity of methyl bromide replaceable, if these are 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 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, and to exchange relevant information.
- 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.

Methyl Bromide under the Rotterdam Convention

6. In 2022, the Chemical Review Committee (CRC) of the Rotterdam Convention on the prior informed consent procedure for certain hazardous chemicals and pesticides in international trade recommended listing methyl bromide in Annex III of the Convention, which includes pesticides and industrial chemicals that have been banned or severely restricted for health or environmental reasons. In October 2023 a draft decision guidance document was considered and approved by the CRC and will be forwarded for final decision at the 12th Conference of the Parties to the Convention in 2025.⁵ If methyl bromide becomes listed in Annex III, countries parties to the Convention exporting or importing this fumigant will need to follow the prior informed consent procedure, which involves exchanging information to ensure informed decisions about trade in methyl bromide.

Key issues for consideration

7. The MBTOC has a similar key role to the TPPT in identifying suitable alternatives to methyl bromide. Continued collaboration with the IPPC and the TPPT, in particular, is considered essential in assisting parties with the phase out of methyl bromide for QPS uses.

8. The MoU between the secretariats of 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.

9. 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.

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

11. The Ozone Secretariat wishes to reiterate that it would appreciate receiving suggestions by the IPPC on possible ways for strengthening the cooperation between the two entities, to enable the parties to the Montreal Protocol to consider them as soon as possible in 2025.

⁵ <https://www.pic.int/TheConvention/Chemicals/Recommendedforlisting/Methylbromide/tabid/9470/language/en-US/Default.aspx>.