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Hell For the Climate and Headed For Catastrophe: Both Spell HFCs

A sense of history never hurts. In 1975 the Chair of the Board of Du Pont was quoted in the trade magazine Chemical Weekly saying that the ozone depletion theory is "a science fiction tale...a load of rubbish...utter nonsense."

In 1987 Du Pont testified before the US Congress that "we believe there is no immediate crisis.... At the moment, scientific evidence does not point to the need for dramatic CFC emission reductions."

In 1988, after the signing of the Montreal Protocol, Du Pont Chair Richard E. Heckert repeated the same message, word for word, to U. S. Senators. At the time the world was consuming over 1 million tonnes of CFCs, and Du Pont and the United States had the lion's share of the global market.

The strategy of the chemical industry in responding to the ozone crisis can be summarised by the four Ds : **DENY** that there is a problem and that you and your products have any responsibility ; **DELAY** effective national and international regulatory action that might negatively impact upon your bottom line; **DOMINATE** the public debate, the science, the technical committees that advise governments, and most importantly, the market ; and whenever possible, **DUMP** your obsolete technologies in the vulnerable markets of developing countries.

The chemical industry's response to the ozone crisis has always been guided by the goal of maintaining the global monopoly the industry has enjoyed with CFCs over nearly fifty years. This fact did not escape Dr. Mostafa Tolba, former head of UNEP, who in 1990 observed : "the chemical industry supported the Montreal Protocol in 1987 because it set up a world-wide schedule for phasing out CFCs, which (were) no longer protected by patents. This provided companies with an equal opportunity to market new, more profitable compounds."

Among those compounds were HFCs. The fact that HFCs are potent global warming gases, have toxicological impacts on the ecosystem, and may be injurious to human health should not be a major obstacle to maintaining the world's chemical dependence. The Alliance for Responsible Atmospheric Policy,

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Time to Demonstrate Progress

There was a time when action against climate change meant policies and measures (PAMs for the in-crowd) - each country taking steps to make emission reductions at home. But, here at SB16 the debate on PAMs has gone deadly quiet. Are delegates (read: US, Canada and Australia) adding the final nail to the PAMs coffin?

Article 2 of the Protocol requires countries to exchange information and share experiences on PAMs. It also encourages them to cooperate with each other in designing and implementing these PAMs. It is clear, however, that all these good intentions are meaningless without an equal focus on analysing the effectiveness of PAMs in enabling Parties to meet their Kyoto targets. After all, what's the point of a policy if it doesn't achieve its goals?

Article 3.2 of the Protocol requires that "each [Annex 1] party shall, by 2005, have made demonstrable progress in achieving its commitments". Demonstrable pro-

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-Hell for the Climate spells HFCs , continued from front page
 the chemical industry's flagship lobby group set up by Du Pont in 1980, and its European franchise, the European Partnership for Energy & The Environment, is by now well versed in the art of the 4 D Strategy. This art is presently being practised upon the Kyoto Protocol.

The chemical industry routinely downplays the rate of future HFC levels. Industry is vigorously lobbying to reduce and eliminate the input of the IPCC into the deliberations of the Parties on HFCs, so as to exert control over the technical information reaching the Parties through the fluorocarbon industry dominated Technical and Economic Assessment Panel of the Montreal Protocol (TEAP). Industry is spreading misinformation about the lack of alternative technologies to HFCs. Industry is dominating the International Standards Committees so as to ensure that some viable alternatives to HFCs , such as hydrocarbons, are restricted in their use.

And industry, with the active "partnership" of UNEP and the US EPA, is propagating the myth that the large scale production and use of HFCs poses no danger to the planet as long as "Responsible Use Principles" are followed. That the US EPA is promoting the use of HFCs is not news. But the ill-conceived participation of UNEP in this scheme is further indication of the inordinate, and counter-productive influence that the chemical industry is able to exert upon how the world is responding to the dual atmospheric crises of ozone layer depletion and global warming.

We have one atmosphere, but two Conventions to protect it, and the chemical industry is aptly playing the same game in both.

-demonstrate progress, continued
 progress is designed as an 'early warning system' for those parties not acting quickly and effectively enough to meet their emissions reduction commitments. At COP7 parties agreed that they would submit a report in 2006 containing descriptions of their policies and measures and an assessment of how these would contribute to meeting their emission reduction targets. The SBI is to review countries' progress on the basis of information from these reports.

Delegates at SB16 must decide on how the information on demonstrable progress will be "presented and evaluated". While the first item is (barely) covered in the current negotiation text, there is a notable absence of a procedure for evaluating the progress reports. Without a review of demonstrable progress, the process becomes an empty reporting gesture and will add little more than the National Communications, which will be submitted around the same time. More importantly, however, we will lose a valuable opportunity for transparency and assessing the effectiveness of countries' efforts to implement the terms of the Protocol.

Will the real Australian position on Kyoto please stand up!

Last week, Australian Prime Minister used World Environment Day to tell the Parliament that his Government will not ratify the Kyoto Protocol. His sense of timing was only surpassed by the irony in this statement that "signing would facilitate exportation of dirty industries from Australia to developing countries," something that is not in the national interest. On World Environment Day, it was good to get clarity that having dirty, polluting industries is in the national interest. And we bet the aluminium and other heavy industries were delighted to hear themselves described as dirty!

Environment Minister David Kemp, in Bali for the Ministerial, had been busy running around telling anyone who will listen that Australia has not yet made up its mind on ratification. Reports have it that the colour rapidly drained from Kemp's face when questioned by the press who had clearly heard about the Prime Minister's statement before the Minister did. Kemp's line is also familiar to those here in Bonn as it has been the line of Australian delegates in side events and in the hallways. Maybe they are hoping that if they hold out for ratification, countries will give them as sweet a deal as Canada received. Don't be fooled folks. It is clear that the Prime Minister's poodle relationship with GW Bush is much more important than the Kyoto Protocol...for the moment that is.

Ludwig - Eager to spend his spare time having his ears talked off by the CDM

Executive Board, Ludwig has been following the discussions on Article 6. The US delegation has been demonstrating its usual keen grasp of the situation by objecting to, er, public participation in these discussions. "Is this really the way we work?" they pouted, as they were forced to listen to an unwanted opinion. At the Belgian co-chair's insistence the NGO subversives were allowed to remain, but fortunately the US delegation were able to distract themselves by picking their noses and playing solitaire, thus avoiding dangerous exposure to outside ideas. No doubt this unprecedented breach of the inner sanctum of decision makers will lead to a string of interventions by environmentalists, traveling salesmen and young women in cakes. But never fear: Enron directors, authors of the US energy plan, would be allowed in too! Assuming they are allowed out on parole.

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