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OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP OF THE PARTIES  
TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL ON SUBSTANCES THAT  
DEplete THE OZONE LAYER

Fifteenth Meeting  
Nairobi, 3-6 June 1997

**ACTIONS TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM  
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL**

(Report of the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the  
Montreal Protocol to the Ninth Meeting of the Parties)



This report is submitted by the Executive Committee pursuant to Decisions VIII/5 and VIII/7 of the Eighth Meeting of the Parties which state, respectively:

“To request the Executive Committee to move forward as expeditiously as possible on decision VII/22, and in particular Actions 5, 6, 10, 11, 14 and 21, and to report back to the Ninth Meeting of the Parties”, and;

“To request the Executive Committee to continue with further actions to implement decision VII/22 to improve the Financial Mechanism and report to the Meetings of the Parties annually.”

The report is based on the draft report originally submitted to the Thirteenth Meeting of the Open-ended Working Group, updated to reflect recent decisions of the Executive Committee up to and including those taken at the Twenty-second Meeting held on 28-30 May 1997. Each of the twenty one actions is reproduced below and the actions taken by the Executive Committee are indicated in bold.

#### Action 1

- (a) Completion of the development by the Executive Committee of (i) a systematic approach to policy development, (ii) monitoring and evaluation guidelines, bearing in mind that operational responsibility remains with Governments, financial intermediaries or the Implementing Agencies, (iii) project templates for all sectors, with a view to having a project evaluation system in place by the end of 1995.

#### *Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- (a)(i) **The Committee has implemented a number of decisions to facilitate preparation, review and approval of projects; and to adopt business planning for the Multilateral Fund which took effect in 1996. The business plans of the implementing agencies include a section on policy issues that should be addressed by the Committee during the year.**
- (a)(ii) **The Committee approved at its Nineteenth Meeting the terms of reference for the design of a monitoring and evaluation system. The Committee at its Twenty-first Meeting decided to establish a standing sub-committee to be called the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Finance Sub-Committee. The first meeting of the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Finance Sub-Committee was held in May 1997. Subsequently at its Twenty-second Meeting, the Committee approved a work programme for the monitoring and evaluation of activities supported by the Multilateral Fund for 1997-1998 including action oriented indicators for monitoring project progress; a set of performance indicators for investment and non-investment projects; formats for project completion reports for investment and non-investment projects and a proposal for standardized component on monitoring and**

evaluation in project proposals. The work programme also includes preparation of an evaluation guide for investment projects and non-investment projects; evaluation of completed projects in the foam and refrigeration sectors and of non-investment project focusing on training activities and institutional strengthening.

- (a)(iii) Since more than 80 per cent of the approved investment projects were in the domestic refrigeration and foams sectors, templates for the two sectors were prepared by the implementing agencies and the Secretariat at the end of 1995. A review of the current templates by the Fund Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies, and the possible extension of their use into other relevant sectors has been initiated.
- (b) The Executive Committee to examine the integration of Agencies' and Secretariat's project review activities no later than six months after it has concluded that the preconditions for increased delegation set out in the recommendations in paragraphs 90 and 91 have been met.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Preconditions for increased delegation are yet to be met. Integration of the Agencies and Secretariat's project review activities will be considered no later than six months after these preconditions have been met.**
- (c) Further delegation by the Executive Committee in due course, with a view to achieving appropriate delegation on over time.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **The Executive Committee will continue to pursue further delegation, as deemed appropriate, over time.**
- (d) Evaluation of the Small Project Approval Process (SPAP) by the Executive Committee on completion of the current project group.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Evaluation of the SPAP by the World Bank is in progress.**

Action 2

- (a) The Executive Committee to develop and take decisions on policy issues already identified, so that a satisfactory number of such issues have been clearly addressed by late 1996. New policy issues are likely to continue to emerge, but would be dealt with more expeditiously with refined administrative processes.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Action completed. Major steps were taken during 1995 to address all policy issues either arising from specific projects or expected to be met at a future date.**

- (b) A list of foreseeable policy issues to be drafted by the Executive Committee with the help of the Implementing Agencies and the Fund Secretariat over the next two meetings.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **A list of issues was developed by the implementing agencies in the context of their 1996 business plans. The Executive Committee considered all and decided some of the following policy issues between its Nineteenth and Twenty-second Meetings:**
  - **Guidelines for renewal of institutional-strengthening projects.**
  - **Innovative approaches for the phasing out of ozone-depleting substances in low-ODS-consuming countries.**
  - **The role of cost-effectiveness thresholds in sectoral phase-out proposals and guidelines for umbrella projects.**
  - **Re-examination of guidelines for halon fire extinguisher conversion projects.**
  - **Duration of transitional periods for incremental operating costs and savings.**
  - **Change of ownership of approved projects.**
  - **Training strategy options for the phase-out of ozone-depleting substances under the Multilateral Fund.**
  - **Guidelines to address incremental capital and operating costs for halon extinguisher conversion projects.**
  - **Projects involving conversion to HCFCs.**
  - **Methyl bromide.**
  - **Further elaboration of guidelines for umbrella projects.**
  - **Production sector.**
  - **Terms of Reference for the study on Technology Transfer.**
  - **Guidelines for the tobacco sector.**
  - **Safety related costs in projects using hydrocarbon technology.**
  - **Progress of implementation of country programmes.**

- **Monitoring and evaluation system for the Multilateral Fund.**
- **Concessional lending for ODS phase-out.**
- **Phase-out of ozone-depleting substances in small- and medium-sized enterprises.**
- **Residual sectoral consumption and umbrella projects.**
- **Study on low-pressure versus high-pressure foaming machines.**
- **Administrative costs of the implementing agencies (status report)**
- **Summary status report on ODS phase-out for Article 5 countries**
- **Indicators for the evaluation of the performance of the implementing agencies**
- **Progress of implementation of country programmes: Implications of using different baseline years**
- **Discrepancy between data reported to the Ozone and Fund Secretariats: Reconciliation and harmonization of the two parallel streams of data reporting**
- **Guidelines for proposals to change technology in approved projects**
- **Incremental operating costs for domestic refrigeration compressors**
- **Training guidelines for identification of needs and coordination of activities**
- **Work programme and work plan for monitoring and evaluation of activities supported by the Multilateral Fund**
- **Cycle of business planning and the submission of work programmes**
- **Retroactive funding**
- **Sector plan for halon phase-out in China**
- **Wider applicability of sector approach**

- (c) The Fund Secretariat and designated consortia of Implementing Agencies to produce consensus options for consideration by the Executive Committee.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Joint efforts by Implementing Agencies and the Fund Secretariat to:**
  - (a) **identify in the annual Business Plan policy issues to be considered in the year;**
  - (b) **prepare policy papers for the consideration of the Executive Committee, with options and analysis of implications.**

- (d) Decisions proposed for the consideration of the Executive Committee should clearly indicate the implications for project proposals if the decisions were to be adopted.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Substantially completed.**

### Action 3

The Committee members should normally refrain from speaking on projects in which they have a direct interest. However, this should not apply to projects which present policy issues, on which the Chair may invite all members to speak, in order to expedite consideration of such projects. It should be evident from records of Meetings of the Executive Committee that all projects are given equal treatment by the Committee.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Implemented.**

### Action 4

The Executive Committee should oversee the completion by the Implementing Agencies and the Secretariat, jointly, by the end of 1995 of a comprehensive, integrated database common to all agencies and the Secretariat, in conjunction with the completion of standard project outlines (templates), with a view to achieving a decrease in the number of projects undergoing substantial revision or reduction in proposed project costs due to the project review process and review the database in mid-1996.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **A joint database between the Implementing Agencies and the Fund Secretariat on the inventory of approved projects is in full operation.**
- **Project templates with an extensive listing of proposed project cost items and incremental cost ranges for the domestic refrigeration and the foams sectors, due to the prevalence of projects in these two sectors, which have been used by the agencies and the Secretariat since 1995, will be revised.**
- **A database on the cost of major capital equipment items is currently under development jointly by the Fund Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies. The database will reflect, inter alia, the actual cost of equipment procured for approved projects.**

### Action 5

- (a) The Executive Committee should examine the effectiveness of its policy dissemination procedures in early 1996. The procedures should include the provision of practical examples of the application of policy decisions, with a view to reducing the extent of project revision during the review process, and also examine the degree to which national ozone protection units and consultants consider they have sufficient information to guide project development.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Reports of meetings of the Executive Committee are sent on a regular basis to all Parties to the Montreal Protocol.**
  - **Policy dissemination is an integral part of the UNEP IE OzonAction programme, continued funding for which has been approved by the Executive Committee.**
  - **Regular coordination meetings between the Fund Secretariat and the implementing agencies and full cooperation in studies on new or emerging technologies are providing a high level of common understanding between all the players involved in project formulation and review.**
  - **A meeting of consultants working on Multilateral Fund activities was held. Additional meetings are foreseen to ensure that the consultants preparing projects are familiar with the contents of the database of major capital equipment.**
  - **The Policies, Procedures and Guidelines handbook, which contains all policy and other decisions taken by the Executive Committee, is updated after every Executive Committee Meeting and made available to the Implementing Agencies. UNEP/IE provides the electronic version of the document in its diskette information service.**
- (b) The Executive Committee should develop operational guidelines for agencies and their consultants.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Each of the implementing agencies submits an annual business plan which cites both investment and non-investment activity in the Article 5 country concerned. The business plan also identifies major policy issues as well as performance indicators.**
  - **Operational guidelines in the form of project “templates” are in use in the domestic refrigeration and foam sub-sectors.**
  - **A database on the cost of major capital equipment items is currently under development jointly by the Fund Secretariat and the Implementing Agencies. The database will reflect, inter alia, the actual cost of equipment procured for approved projects.**
- (c) The Executive Committee should consider a report on incremental costs for the production of CFC-substitutes and establish firm compensation policies with a view



to completing incremental cost guidelines for the production of CFC substitutes by mid-1996.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **The Executive Committee has been working on the guidelines to compensate for the phase-out of ODS production in Article 5 countries since 1994. To assist the decision making process, the Executive Committee established an Expert Group on the Production of Substitutes of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) and a Subgroup on the Production Sector. At its third and fourth meetings, the Expert Group proposed to the Executive Committee a methodology for the calculation of compensation of shutting down the ODS production facilities in Article 5 countries. Before taking a decision on the methodology, the Executive Committee requested a careful examination by a consultant of the financial implications of adopting the methodology, and selected a 4-member Core Group from the Expert Group to interact with the consultant.**
- **At the Twenty-second Meeting, the Executive Committee noted that there remained a number of complex issues which would merit further discussion by the Subgroup with the view to resolving those issues as expeditiously as possible; requested the Subgroup to meet in September 1997 to discuss remaining issues and to review the consolidated report to be prepared by the Secretariat on the guidelines and recommendations made by the Expert Group and modified by the Subgroup and any relevant decision of the Executive Committee; and requested the Secretariat to advise the Subgroup, at its meeting in September 1997, whether resources are available to permit it to hold an extra meeting prior to December 1997.**

Action 6

The Executive Committee should evaluate the regime adopted for 1995, taking into account the study's recommendations, including the recommendation that: "Cost-effectiveness norms should be prepared based on model projects of different capacities under standard conditions. Thereafter, projects should be assessed on their own merits." Nonetheless, all eligible projects shall continue to be funded overtime irrespective of their relative cost-effectiveness. In case of delayed funding, however, lump-sum payments could be considered.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **The Committee has taken a decision that the cost-effectiveness thresholds should not apply to projects from LVCs, a group which makes up the majority of Article 5 countries to the Protocol. In addition, the**

Committee is reviewing the cost-effectiveness thresholds adopted at the Sixteenth Meeting to address special needs and circumstances (e.g., completion of sector phase out) of larger consuming countries. The Executive Committee considered at its Nineteenth Meeting a paper on approaches to ODS phase-out in small-and medium-sized enterprises. A further paper on the subject was discussed at the Twentieth Meeting at which the Executive Committee requested the Secretariat to carry out additional work and bring recommendations to the Twenty-second Meeting.

- Based on a paper submitted by the Secretariat to the Twenty-second Meeting, the Executive Committee noted that several representatives expressed concern about problems associated with accessing the relevant data and with its reliability; invited countries to provide the Secretariat and the Executive Committee with explanations of the factors responsible for these problems; noted also that several representatives expressed concerns that advancing phase-out in the SME sector required moving beyond relying on "a project approach" and focusing instead on other types of support measures to assist individual Article 5 Parties meet the ODS control schedules in the Protocol.
- In this context the Committee decided to establish a contact group that would meet at the next Executive Committee meeting to continue the discussion on SMEs focusing on problems and challenges in achieving SMEs phase-out; proposals on national strategies and plan to move ahead on SME phase-out. The Executive Committee also decided to set up a pilot programme on SMEs at the next meeting. To that end the contact group will present proposals on the Sectors and Sub-sectors to be focused on and the criteria to be applied.
- The Executive Committee has agreed that, for a trial period, individual project proposals in "terminal umbrella projects" which meet the relevant overall criteria, could exceed the applicable cost-effectiveness threshold by up to 100 percent.

#### Action 7

- (a) Relevant Implementing Agencies should review institutional strengthening experiences and present a combined paper to the Executive Committee, which will include guidelines on the possible proportionate commitment of Article 5 countries in such areas as financial, organizational and human resource support, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of ODS phase-out strategies.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

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- **At its Twenty-second Meeting, the Executive Committee decided on a work plan for monitoring and evaluation which includes evaluation of institutional strengthening projects.**

(b) Institutional strengthening could include, at the request of Article 5 countries, assistance to meet their country programme goals relative to laws and regulations.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Noted. Several institutional strengthening project proposals under implementation included support for development of laws and legislation regarding ODS phase-out programmes.**

### Action 8

The Executive Committee should select a lead Agency to prepare the framework for a policy dialogue with Article 5 countries by the end of 1996, with a view to enhancing regulatory support to ODS phase-out in Article 5 countries.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **The Executive Committee has funded under UNEP work programme several activities regarding policy and legislation, inter-alia: training modules on policy design and setting up of legislation; disseminate awareness materials, technical and policy information, and; development of a handbook on the practical use of policy instruments.**
- **In 1996, UNEP IE convened a meeting with the UNEP-Environmental Law Unit, the Multilateral Fund and Ozone Secretariats and representatives of the Implementing Agencies for this purpose.**

### Action 9

The Executive Committee should request a lead Implementing Agency, with the other Agencies and the Secretariat, to further develop, as appropriate, the guidelines for country programmes, taking into account these recommendations, with a view to the adoption by the Executive Committee of revised guidelines. The Executive Committee will consider these guidelines in the light of its experience to date taking into account, as appropriate, the sectoral approach to technology transfer. However, approval of eligible projects should not be made contingent upon revision of country programmes. Any revision of the country programme would be at the request of the Party concerned.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **The Committee at its Twenty-second Meeting requested UNEP to adjust country programmes presently under preparation to accommodate the requirements of Draft Refrigerant Management Plan Guidelines; and, in cases where no country programmes for VLVC/LVC Parties have yet to be started, to reach out to those countries to develop Refrigerant Management Plans/country programme combination documents based on the draft guidelines.**
- **In addition, the Committee authorized LVCs that have approved country programmes and now need to take near-term action in this area to meet the freeze, to submit Refrigerant Management Plans based on the Draft Guidelines along with any associated projects, to the next meeting of the Executive Committee.**

Action 10

The study by the World Bank on the establishment of a concessional loan mechanism, requested by the Executive Committee at its Sixteenth Meeting, should be completed as soon as possible, and analyzed and discussed by the Executive Committee at its Nineteenth Meeting, and a decision on suitable future steps be taken by the Executive Committee by its Twentieth Meeting or by the Meeting of the Parties in 1996, as appropriate, with a view to starting the use of concessional loans by the end of 1996, to the extent that the need and demand exist.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **At the Twenty-first Meeting, the Executive Committee invited the submission of an innovative proposal for demonstration projects to illustrate how concessional lending and other forms of innovative funding, including finance from the private sector, may be used to advance the phase out of ozone depleting substances. The Executive Committee also allocated US \$60,000 towards the cost of a concessional financing study to be carried out by the International Finance Corporation (World Bank Group) to examine the use of private-sector finance and to provide a final theoretical overview of ways in which concessional funding and other forms of innovative funding, including on-lending, can be used.**

### Action 11.

The Executive Committee should examine the issue of industrial consolidation, taking into account national industrial strategies of Article 5 countries, with a view to achieving more effective approaches to ODS phase-out.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **The Executive Committee has approved projects which include components of industrial consolidation. For example, funding has been provided for the establishment of centralized filling stations for small aerosol fillers in three Article 5 countries. Furthermore, the Executive Committee has approved projects for conversion of the manufacture of compressors for commercial refrigeration according to a strategy which involves consolidation of existing production facilities in China.**

### Action 12

Noting that the Executive Committee approved funding for Latin American and African Networks, the Executive Committee should review the existing similar networks and establish new networks, as appropriate.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Action completed. Funding was approved at the Nineteenth Meeting for a West-Asia network. Within the global allocation for UNEP IE, the Latin American network has been replaced by three networks for South America, Central America and Mexico and the English speaking Caribbean.**

### Action 13

The Implementing Agencies should report to the Executive Committee on measures to include ODS phase-out issues into their ongoing dialogue on development programming and on measures they could take to mobilize non-Fund resources in support of Montreal Protocol objectives, with a view to achieving an increase in the number of ozone-protection projects.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Efforts have been made by agencies, with varying degrees of success, to mobilize non-Fund resources in support of the objectives of the Montreal Protocol, e.g., non-Fund resources were used in the preparation of**

**country programmes of several Article 5 countries. Non-Fund resources are used for supporting the South-east Asia network.**

#### Action 14

The Executive Committee should consider the need for new Implementing Agencies for loan programmes in the light of emerging sectoral strategy policies and for methyl bromide after the Seventh Meeting of the Parties.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **At this stage, the Executive Committee has not concluded that additional implementing agencies are required for concessional loan programmes.**
- **The interim guidelines for methyl bromide projects adopted at the Twentieth Meeting do not make reference to additional implementing agencies.**

#### Action 15

The Executive Committee should urge the Article 5 countries concerned to select Implementing Agencies and mode of implementation keeping in mind the need to implement projects without delay.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Noted.**

#### Action 16

The World Bank should report on the training and incentive structure and, at its Nineteenth Meeting, the Executive Committee should consider this report and the relationship of the costs of training to total overhead costs, in order to ensure that the Executive Committee is fully informed about the role, resourcing and effectiveness of Financial Intermediaries.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **The World Bank has moved away from the policy of charging the Fund separately for administration, training and financing of Financial Intermediaries to a policy of charging a lump sum amount of 13% in line with the other Implementing Agencies. Therefore, the issue here has been invalidated.**

### Action 17

The Executive Committee should request each Implementing Agency to report, as and when the issue arises, on legal and institutional impediments to project implementation and measures taken to address them as soon as possible.

#### *Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **As part of their progress reports on project implementation, Implementing Agencies report on legal and institutional impediments, as pertinent, to project implementation and measures to address them.**
- **At its Twentieth Meeting the Executive Committee decided that when preparing projects in countries where serious delays in implementation were likely to occur, the implementing agencies could raise these issues with the Executive Committee in those cases where it seemed that the Executive Committee might be able to help remove the impediment, and should submit projects only when such impediments had been resolved.**
- **At its Twenty-second Meeting the Executive Committee requested the Implementing Agencies to include a "List of Projects With No Significant Activity In the Last Two Years" in all future progress reports. The Executive Committee also decided that where no disbursement had occurred 18 months after the date of approval of a project, a full explanation of the reason for the delay should be submitted by the implementing agencies to the next meeting of the Executive Committee for review; that where a project had not been completed 12 months after the proposed completion date in the progress report of the Implementing Agencies to this Executive Committee, a full explanation of the reason for the delay should also be submitted by the implementing agencies to the next meeting of the Executive Committee for review. The Committee decided to review the reports on a case-by-case basis and decide upon the action required. On the basis of the experience gained through consideration of these reports, the Executive Committee would consider the development of guidelines to ensure that the project preparation process included measures to prevent any delays in implementation or completion in the future.**
- **The Executive Committee was informed by relevant parties and implementing agencies at the Twenty-second Meeting that significant legal and institutional impediments in two countries had recently been overcome.**

Action 18

- (a) The World Bank and all other institutions associated with the Financial Mechanism should propose measures to assist UNEP in collecting contributions in arrears.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **The World Bank advised that senior management of the World Bank has taken up the issue of arrears to the Multilateral Fund on various occasions with countries which had not paid their contributions.**
- (b) The World Bank should review with UNEP the processes for acceptance of promissory notes.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **The World Bank and UNEP's Treasurer have resolved the acceptance of promissory notes with those countries issuing such notes. A report by the Fund Treasurer on the use of promissory notes was considered at the 19th Meeting of the Executive Committee. UNDP and UNIDO have submitted proposals to amend their agreements with the Executive Committee in order for them to make commitments against promissory notes held by the Treasurer. These amendments are expected to be discussed by the Executive Committee at its Twenty-third Meeting.**

Action 19

The Executive Committee should monitor the extent to which the available bilateral component is utilized.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Completed. The use of bilateral funding is monitored by the Fund Secretariat on the basis of the progress reports submitted by bilateral partners. The Secretariat reports the information in the consolidated progress reports to the Executive Committee.**
- **At the Twenty-second Meeting, a mid-year assessment of utilization of the annual provision of funding for bilateral activities was agreed.**

Action 20

The Executive Committee should pay attention to training directly related to investment projects and consider training of technical experts from Article 5 countries, especially when



addressing the needs of small-ODS users. Where the Fund supports eligible projects of research to adapt technology to local circumstances, it should encourage the involvement of Article 5 country technical experts in the discussions of technical options, and the effective involvement of local experts in field missions.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Action is in progress.**
- **All implementing agencies rely more and more on national experts, where available, for the identification, preparation and implementation of projects.**

### Action 21

- (a) The Executive Committee should prepare an itemized progress report on measures taken so far, in the context of Article 10 of the Protocol, to establish a mechanism specifically for the transfer of technology and the technical know-how at fair and most favorable conditions necessary to phase out ozone-depleting substances; and at the same time.
- (b) The Executive Committee should request UNEP to intensify its efforts to collect information from relevant sources, and to prepare an inventory and assessment of environmentally sound and economically viable technologies and know-how conducive to phase out of ozone-depleting substances. This inventory should also include an elaboration of terms under which transfers of such technologies and know-how could take place.
- (c) The Executive Committee should consider what steps can practicably be taken to eliminate any impediments in the international flow of technology.
- (d) The Executive Committee should further elaborate the issue of the eligible incremental costs of technology transfer, including costs of patents and designs and the incremental costs of royalties as negotiated by the recipient enterprises.

The actions in subparagraphs (a), (b) and (c) should be completed by its Nineteenth Meeting and updated periodically, and the action in subparagraph (d) should be taken immediately.

*Action taken by the Executive Committee:*

- **Following the report of the Executive Committee to the Eighth Meeting of the Parties concerning its relevant activities in relation to this action, the Parties decided to constitute an Informal Group on the Transfer of Technology.**

**The facilitator of the Group informed the Executive Committee at its Twenty-second Meeting, which was held subsequent to the Group's first meeting, that relevant Parties will be requested to provide information on issues associated with technology transfer and that the Group will convene its next meeting at the time of the Ninth Meeting of the Parties for further discussion.**