

# Press Release No. 55/2010

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## International regulation of fluorinated greenhouse gases

### Federal Environment Agency publishes report showing real ways to phase them out

The Federal Environment Agency sees a necessity for clear regulation of fluorinated greenhouse gases that is binding by international law so as to prevent an increase of their emissions worldwide. Since fluorinated greenhouse gases, or F-gases, were developed primarily as a substitute for ozone-depleting fluorochlorinated hydrocarbons (CFC) the Federal Environment Agency applauds the addition to previous regulations of the Kyoto Protocol of regulations covering their production and use as modelled by the Montreal Protocol. The signatory states to the Montreal Protocol submitted relevant proposals to protect the ozone layer at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Conference of the Parties in Bangkok. These negotiations must be resumed next year and advanced to a resolution that benefits the ozone layer and the climate.

Fluorinated greenhouse gases (F-gases) are 100 to 24,000 more harmful to the climate than CO<sub>2</sub>. The roughly 7,300 tonnes of fluorinated greenhouses gases emitted to the atmosphere in Germany in 2007 are thus equivalent to about 17.3 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, or the volume of CO<sub>2</sub> which 200 million passenger vehicles emit on the route from Berlin to Munich. According to Federal Environment Agency forecasts, the global share of the F-gases substance group in overall greenhouse gas emissions-- currently about two percent- will increase to six percent by 2050 if no action is taken.

In acknowledgement of their global warming potential and the expected rise in emissions of fluorinated greenhouse gases, the Federal Environment Agency has now updated its 2004 report. Given that a large number of businesses have developed climate-friendly alternatives, the report makes proposals for a wide range of measures by which to avoid these substances. Good practice examples include energy-efficient installations that use natural refrigerants to cool refrigerated and frozen food sections in supermarkets, or the German railways' ICE trains which have unfailingly provided air conditioning--unlike systems using F-gases- even during last year's hot summer. "The German and European businesses that have developed and marketed energy-efficient systems without fluorinated greenhouse gases represent one crucial first step. It is now up to grocery retailers and public transport operators to use these climate-friendly systems on a large scale", says Jochen Flasbarth, President of the Federal Environment Agency.

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The *Fluorierte Treibhausgase vermeiden - Wege zum Ausstieg* publication (German) is an updated source of information on the technical means to reduce emissions available to all stakeholders in the European and international debate. It has been published in the Climate Change series (300 pages) and is available for download on the Internet at <http://www.uba.de/uba-info-medien-e/3962.html>.

Dessau-Roßlau, 18 November 2010