

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED: DENR & UNEP CONVENED FOR THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL COMMITMENT & IMPLEMENTATION MISSION



QUEZON CITY, Philippines — To consolidate efforts in protecting and preserving the ozone layer, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the leading global authority on the environment, paid a visit to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources - Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) and successfully conducted a series of meetings for the Montreal Protocol Commitment and Implementation.

The Montreal Protocol is a landmark multilateral environmental agreement that regulates the production and consumption of the Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS). The Philippines commits to phase out its consumption of all ODS and has instituted the Philippine Ozone Desk (POD) or the National Ozone Unit (NOU) as the national coordinator of programs for the implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

The three-day mission last April 2-4, 2024, was designed to relay the UNEP's observation on the 2023 country program to the POD. This also opened a platform to communicate the unit's concerns, struggles, and support needed from the UNEP to champion the programs in line with the Montreal Protocol.

Mr. Pipat Poopeerasupong, UNEP Programme Officer in Asia Pacific, opened the mission by meeting Undersecretary Jonas Leones, the DENR National Coordinator for Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) Phaseout and Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) Phasedown Program, together with EMB Assistant Director, Engr. Esperanza Sajul, where he presented an overview of the mission and discussed the significance of his visit.

The office of Undersecretary Leones welcomed Mr. Poopeerasupong and exchanged information regarding the Institutional Strengthening Project (ISP), one of the three projects under the POD, its implementation, and future plans for the ODS and HFCs Phaseout Programs in the country.

Part of the mission is to discuss the on-going challenges of multilateral projects and ISP activities in the country and present the status and backlogs of the unit from the past phases. The UNEP commended the unit for its strategies and the successful curbing of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFC) and HFC consumption in the country, as well as the gender and development projects instituted by the POD.

Another important aspect of the mission is the inquiry about the structure and operations of the DENR-EMB POD, as the unit's personnel were mainstreamed into different divisions of the bureau. The unit assured UNEP that every personnel member functions efficiently according to their designation and still works collaboratively with everyone in the unit.



The UNEP representative dedicated his second day to conducting divisional discussions where each concerned division of the bureau reiterates their pivotal role in the ISP and presents their status, accomplishment report, and future plans in line with the project. Mr. Poopeerasupong, on the other hand, expressed the UNEP's expectations and targets from each division.

The mission was concluded through an exit meeting with the EMB Assistant Director, Engr. Esperanza Sajul and the POD personnel, where Mr. Poopeerasupong presented the results of the discussions and communications during the mission.

Mission accomplished, indeed. The DENR-EMB POD is looking forward to another mission with UNEP to report on the progress and triumphs of the unit in the coming years.