UNITED

NATIONS

EP

**United Nations
Environment
Programme**

Distr.
Limited

UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/33/7
26 February 2001

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
 THE MULTILATERAL FUND FOR THE
 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL
Thirty-third Meeting
Montreal, 28-30 March 2001

FINAL REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF REGIONAL NETWORKS

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

1.	The present report is the **synthesis of an evaluation of Regional Networks** carried out as foreseen in the 2000 Monitoring and Evaluation Work Programme. The evaluation was based, in each case, on available desk studies, network documents, and on attending network meetings. It was carried out in a participatory manner in collecting the opinions of all participants from Article 5 and non-Article 5 countries, as well as the Implementing Agencies and the Secretariat. Evaluation issues had been defined in a desk study presented to the 30th Meeting of the Executive Committee (document UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/30/8). Case studies on each network are available on request in printed form and are also accessible on the Executive Committee's documents section, 'Evaluation Reports', of the Multilateral Fund Secretariat's web site.

2.	**The general conclusion** of the evaluators is that the administrative and technical capacities of the National Ozone Units, as an important means for facilitating the achievement of the main objectives of the Montreal Protocol, have considerably improved through the Networks' impact. The Networks have reached a certain level of maturity, but show also some repetitive routines, focusing mainly on regular meetings twice yearly. The competences acquired and linkages established should now be used to further develop the professional level, the focus and the result-orientation of the exchanges organized by the Networks during and between meetings, as already started during the year 2000.

3.	The **recommendations presented** in the last section of the report are addressed primarily to the network's management and to the members from Article 5 and non-Article 5 countries, and in a few instances, to the Implementing Agencies and the Multilateral Fund Secretariat. A number of them have already been discussed at various network and other meetings and have started to be put into practice last year. As there is no fundamental adjustment or change recommended but a gradual improvement and fine-tuning of the networks' operations, there is no need for a detailed decision by the Executive Committee which might take note of the recommendations and request UNEP to implement them.

I   Background and Scope of this Report

1.   The present report is the synthesis of an evaluation of Regional Networks carried out as foreseen in the 2000 Monitoring and Evaluation Work Programme. The starting point was the 1999 evaluation of institutional strengthening projects which reported that "all National Ozone Units agreed about the usefulness of the Regional Network Meetings, but said also they have not fully exploited their potential and could be made more effective" (UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/30/6, p. 5). Discussion and adoption of the actions proposed in this evaluation report for improving the effectiveness of the Regional Networks were postponed until a separate evaluation would have analyzed the issues raised in more depth.

2.   The present report is based on a draft prepared by a consultant who reviewed the evaluation reports available on individual Regional Networks and commented on those papers as well as on recent UNEP work programmes and network meeting reports; this draft was then discussed and revised with the Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer. The resulting paper was circulated to the other consultants involved in the evaluation of networks, Secretariat staff and to the Implementing Agencies. Numerous comments were received, discussed and integrated into the present final version.

3.   **Sources of information:** For preparing the synthesis report, the following sources of information have been used:

(a)   Draft Evaluation Report of the Regional Networks of the Southeast Asia and Pacific Network (prepared in April 2000 by Stefan Musto, Consultant);

(b)   Draft Analysis of Questionnaires received from the West Asia Network (prepared in May 2000 by the Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer; the results of the later evaluation by Mrs. Naima Al-Shayji, Consultant, were integrated in February 2001 into the present synthesis report);

(c)   Draft Evaluation Report of the English-speaking African Sub-Network (prepared in June 2000 by Stefan Musto, Consultant);

(d)   Draft Evaluation Report of the Regional Networks of the South America, the Central America, Mexico and Spanish-speaking Caribbean ODS Officers' Network (prepared in August 2000 by Marco Antonio Gonzalez, Consultant);

(e)   Draft Evaluation Report of the Regional Network of the Caribbean Region (prepared in August 2000 by Marco Antonio Gonzalez, Consultant);

(f)   Draft Evaluation Report of the French-speaking African Network (prepared in August 2000 by the Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer);

(g)   Draft Evaluation Report of the South Asia Network (prepared in October 2000 by the Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer);

(h)   Desk Study on the Evaluation of Regional Networks (document UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/30/8) (March 2000);

(i)   UNEP Progress and Financial Report under the Multilateral Fund (Jan.1-Dec.31, 2000);

(j)   OzonAction Work Plan 2000 – Networking (April 2000);

(k)   UNEP 2001 Work Programme (October 2000);

(l)   Notes from the Network Manager and the Regional Network Coordinators on the evaluation of Regional Networks;

(m)   Several short comments by Regional Network Coordinators on draft evaluation reports of Regional Networks.

4.   **Methodology applied:** Regional networks are not fully susceptible to be analyzed under the paradigm of closed mechanistic systems of linear causation where measurable progress in eliminating ODS can be directly linked to network activities in a cause and effect sequence. Instead, regional networking is to be conceived as an open, dynamic, evolutionary process, a learning exercise. Conclusions with regard to its contribution to ODS phase out have to remain qualitative in nature. Also, the capacity building effects of networks for the participating National Ozone Units are difficult to measure and are partly overlapping with the effects of the ongoing institutional strengthening projects and other efforts to facilitate and achieve compliance of all Article 5 countries with the Montreal Protocol.

5.   The evaluation was based, in each case, on available desk studies, network documents, and on attending network meetings where questionnaires were filled in by the participants. Group discussions and individual interviews were carried out with the participating Ozone Officers, the Network Manager, the Regional Network Coordinators and representatives of the Implementing Agencies. The evaluation was carried out in a participatory manner in collecting the opinions of all participants from Article 5 and non-Article 5 countries as well as the Implementing Agencies and the Secretariat, discussing the draft evaluation reports in the network meetings and integrating comments received into the final versions as appropriate.

6.   The information obtained was related to the objectives of networking as laid down in UNEP's and network documents in order to assess the progress achieved, and to identify benefits and weaknesses of the Regional Networks' operations as perceived by the participants. The draft evaluation reports were discussed in depth with the Network Manager and the Regional Network Coordinators as well as with the participants in several network meetings. Their comments were considered and incorporated as appropriate into the final case studies on each network, which are available on request in printed form and also accessible on the Executive Committee's documents section of the Multilateral Fund Secretariat's web site.

7.   **Evaluation issues:** The issues to be analyzed and assessed, as defined in the Desk Study on the Evaluation of Regional Networks, presented to the 30th Meeting of the Executive Committee (document UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/30/8), have been the following:

(a)   Planning of network activities and procedures of the Network meetings;

(b)   Time frame of the activities related to the objectives or expected results;

(c)   Contribution of the Network activities to the achievement of sub-objectives;

(d)   Follow-up to meetings in terms of results of activities initiated in previous meetings;

(e)   Capacity building in terms of enhancing the performance of the National Ozone Units;

(f)   Transmission of policy decisions taken by the Executive Committee or the Meeting of the Parties;

(g)   Smoothing project implementation;

(h)   Cooperation or linkages with non-Article 5 countries.

II   Network Activities and Objectives

8.   At present, **eight regional networks operate:** three in Asia and the Pacific, three in Latin America and the Caribbean, and two in Africa. The first network started for SEAP countries in 1990 with funding from Sweden. Under the Multilateral Fund, networks were initiated for Latin America and the Caribbean in 1993, English- and French-speaking Africa in 1994, West Asia in 1996 and South Asia in 1997. Networking activities are organized by five Regional Network Coordinators under the overall management of UNEP's Network Manager. The list of the member countries of regional networks is attached in Annex I.

9.   **Network activities** consist basically of two annual meetings: a main meeting and a follow-up meeting. Between meetings, some specialized workshops take place regularly to discuss issues that have been identified as particularly relevant. Moreover, the Networks have been conceived as a forum for continuous communication between National Ozone Units, either directly or sometimes through the Regional Network Coordinator. The individual Ozone Units are thereby enabled to share knowledge and experience and to develop cooperation with each other. By providing knowledge, solving common problems and developing partnerships, the Regional Networks assist in strengthening expertise and management capacity of the participating Ozone Units. The networks, in particular, the Regional Network Coordinators, also play an important role in facilitating information flow from UNEP's Clearinghouse and Implementing Agencies to Ozone Units, and vice versa.

10.   The **objectives of the Networks** were defined until UNEP's 2001 Work Programme (see below) in a way that allowed for a high degree of flexibility to adapt to changing conditions, needs and requirements. They were not structured in terms of a long- medium- and short-term perspective, and they did not always make a clear difference between objectives (a situation expected to prevail after achieving a set of results) and activities (work undertaken to obtain a result). In contrast to other non-investment projects, there were also no milestones for project implementation defined. All of this makes it difficult to use clear-cut indicators to measure or to assess the degree of goal achievement.

11.   The following **global objective** was given by UNEP in its 1996 Work Programme and in subsequent Work Programmes until the year 2000: "The objective of the ODS Officers Network is to strengthen the capacity of NOUs in Article 5 countries to design and implement effective policies and strategies, well-adapted to the conditions of their countries." In UNEP's Work Programme for 2001, the global objective was adapted to the requirements of the compliance period as follows:

> "The basic aim of the Networks is to strengthen the capacity of National Ozone Officers to design and implement effective policies and strategies, well adapted to conditions in their countries, which will achieve their country's compliance with the control measures of the Montreal Protocol."

12.   **The modalities** of the Regional Network's operation to achieving this global objective are the following (according to UNEP's 2001 Work Programme, where they were extended compared to earlier work programmes by points b, g and h):

(a)   Provide a regular forum for efficient exchange of information, ideas and experiences among ODS Officers;

(b)   Encourage and facilitate the provision of assistance by experienced Ozone Officers to their newly appointed colleagues;

(c)   Improve access to available technical, scientific and policy-related information required by National Ozone Officers;

(d)   Facilitate feedback to the Multilateral Fund Secretariat, Ozone Secretariat and Implementing Agencies on progress made by member countries to comply with the Montreal Protocol, difficulties encountered and the need for further support and assistance;

(e)   Provide an important opportunity to inform ODS officers of Decisions of the Executive Committee and the Meetings of the Parties and assist with their implementation;

(f)   Promote sharing of information and awareness raising materials developed by Network member countries;

(g) Review progress on implementation of investment and non-investment projects;

(h) Assist with collecting and verifying data for reporting to the Ozone Secretariat and the Multilateral Fund Secretariat;

(i) Initiate regional and joint activities to promote awareness raising, information exchange and other enabling actions to facilitate compliance.

13. UNEP's Work Programme for 2001, presented for the first time the objectives of the networks in a logical framework perspective, showing medium-term and short-term objectives and related activities, expected results, performance indicators and assumptions/risks. This is a very positive step forward, which is the result of discussions held about the evaluation exercise during last year. However, since these specific objectives had not been formulated prior to the evaluation, they could not constitute appropriate criteria for the assessment of the effectiveness of Regional Networks activities. Moreover, they had not been discussed and endorsed by the Network members, a process that is to be followed up during 2001. According to the information received by the evaluators, UNEP has been following a planning approach corresponding to SIDA standards for the SEAP Network in the past and already had objectives and activities formulated for other Networks in previous years, but only for internal use for planning and reporting. In the future, the reporting in the annual progress report should also be more closely aligned to the logic of result orientation, as started in UNEP's Progress and Financial Report for 1999.

III   Evaluation Results by Objectives

14. **Ranking of effects produced by Networking:** The goal-specific appraisal of the Network activities was based on the question: "To what extent has participation in the Network contributed to building up capacities and to increasing the effectiveness of National Ozone Units in dealing with different areas of action related to the implementation of the Montreal Protocol?" The participants of the meetings were asked to assign a rating value to the effects produced by networking in each one of the respective fields of action relating to the main objective and to the sub-objectives. The ratings (very significant effects, important effects, some positive effects, no effects at all) were based on subjective judgements, thus the results reflect perceptions rather than facts.

15. **Goal-achievement:** Based on the judgement of the Ozone Officers, networking activities have exerted an important positive effect on improving their skills, know how and experience. The most significant improvements have been identified in the areas of reporting, data collection, promotion of public awareness and the level of information relating to alternative technologies and substances. According to the responses, less progress has been achieved with regard to dealing with small- and medium-sized enterprises and the servicing sector, which in fact remain major problematic areas to the overall operation of the Multilateral Fund. It is interesting to note that the patterns of rating turned out to be almost uniform across all Regional Networks.

16.   **The effects of networking** on improvements in specific areas of action have been identified and rated by the participants – across all networks evaluated – in a sequence from the most to the least important effects accordingly:

(a)   Reporting: 57% of the Ozone Officers identified very significant effects and 33% important effects;

(b)   Promotion of public awareness: 51% very significant, and 33% important effects;

(c)   Data collection: 51% very significant, and 31% important effects;

(d)   Knowledge of alternative technologies and substances: 45% very significant, and 39% important effects;

(e)   Systems of import licensing: 35% very significant, 35% important, and 10% no effects at all;

(f)   Drafting of legal rules: 26% very significant, 35% important effects;

(g)   Monitoring of trade and consumption of ODS: 26% very significant, 30% some positive effects;

(h)   Control of the servicing sector: 20% very significant, 16% no effects at all;

(i)   Dealing with the small- and medium-sized enterprises: 15% very significant, 29% some positive, and 29% no effects at all;

(j)   Systems of fiscal incentives: 9% very significant, 41% no effects at all.

17.   Moreover, during the course of personal interviews and group discussions, several **specific problems** were mentioned by the participants who reported that the Network has effectively helped them to overcome some of these problems (e.g. difficulties of project identification in the solvent sector, establishment of a licensing system, lack of equipment and training for effective import control, administrative bottlenecks, etc).

IV   Evaluation Results by Issues and Modalities

18.   **Composition of Networks:** All individual evaluation reports indicate that the level of professional experience among Ozone Officers who participate in the network meetings, varies considerably. Some of the Ozone Officers have attended up to 14 meetings while for some others it was the first time to participate in a network meeting. This is due mainly to the frequent turnover of personnel in individual National Ozone Units, but also to the fact that some countries are not always represented with the same officer in the Network meetings. Network members generally feel that optimal cooperation during and between meetings requires regular attendance, which would facilitate discussions, common understanding of issues, and continuity of activities.

19.   **Professional qualification:** Disregarding the differing level of experience, the majority of Ozone Officers who participated in the Network meetings have a high level of scientific professional background. Most of them possess degrees in chemical engineering, biology, physics or environment sciences. Some of them with longer experience in ozone-related activities are widely accepted as resource persons by their colleagues.

20.   **The planning of the Network activities** has been positively assessed by most participants. In cases whereby problems and/or difficulties have been reported, particularly in Africa, these related generally to problems with travel and communication conditions (e.g. tickets received too late, itineraries not adequately explored, insufficient DSA). The majority of the participants indicated to have a good opportunity to provide inputs for the meetings. In one case, however, (West Asia) 70 per cent of the respondents reported that they contributed only through regular country reports to the meeting.

21.   **The topics to be treated** at the next meeting are regularly proposed and discussed by the participants. The agenda is being set up by the Regional Network Coordinator, in cooperation with the Network Manager, and sent for comments to the individual National Ozone Units who may raise new issues and make further suggestions. Items included in the agenda normally consist of new/emerging issues in certain member countries, issues raised by members at the previous meetings, and/or at Executive Committee meetings or Meetings of the Parties. The respondents generally agreed in stating that the issues on the agenda are relevant and of special interest to the participants. Some noted that meeting documents are not always distributed prior to the meetings.

22.   **The preparation and organization** of the Network meetings under the responsibility of the Network Manager, the Regional Network Coordinator and the Ozone Office of the respective host country have, in all cases reported, complied with the professional requirements. Moreover, weaknesses or shortcomings have neither been observed by the consultants nor reported by the participants.

23.   However, in some individual evaluation reports the question is raised **how to relate the issues** on the agenda and the corresponding network activities **to the sub-objectives** and the main objective of the Montreal Protocol in a more systematic manner. It is also not completely clear to what extent Ozone Officers, Regional Network Coordinators and the Network Manager are responsible for Network results and contributions to those objectives as the overall performance of the Network depends on the cooperation of all stakeholders involved. Some evaluation reports stress that further fine-tuning and updating of objectives and annual action plans, defined in terms of results to be achieved, would allow for progress in estimating a logical framework of planning for the Networks as a whole and the individual Networks in particular.

24.   **The duration of the meetings** has been assessed by the great majority of the participants as quite adequate, in some cases (particularly in West Asia) was considered as being too short in view of the number of topics on the agenda. Two meetings per year have generally been considered as appropriate. It was repeatedly suggested that, from time to time, experts from other regional networks should also be invited in order to exchange views and experiences.

Also, local expertise should be more intensively involved. Country Progress Reports and other presentations are generally considered as too long; the reports should be presented and discussed topic by topic, rather than country by country. Such presentations should focus more on specific issues such as lessons learnt, concrete experiences, specific problems. There is unanimity among the evaluators that the quality of presentations and discussions has in most cases been high or at least satisfactory, although it was also noted that Ozone Officers could in some networks play a more active role in the discussions and act more often as resource persons.

25.   **The role of the Network Management** (Network Manager and Regional Network Coordinators) in providing guidance to the meetings has been unanimously assessed by the participants, as well as by the evaluators, as being competent and dedicated.

26.   However, **the allocation of time** for presentations, reports, decision-making and open discussions proved sometimes to be problematic. The Network Management faced some difficulties in striking a suitable balance between the different topics. Although some participants expressed the view that more time should be allocated for open discussion, the impression of some evaluators was that the extension of time for discussion did not necessarily encourage participants to make use of this opportunity. It is obvious that on technical matters and in large, rather formal meetings, participants hesitate to come forward with contributions, while on policy issues, discussions were lively, particularly in less formal settings.

27.   **Activities between Network meetings:** Communication and cooperation among individual National Ozone Units is generally limited to cases when some specific information or advice is needed. There are some positive examples, for instance, the Republic of South Africa, which regularly consults with other Southern African countries. Also, the SEAP Network shows a fairly impressive record of horizontal interrelations between member countries of the region, and Ozone Officers from some other countries, like India, Sri Lanka or Senegal, for example, act repeatedly as resource persons for other National Ozone Units. Many participants reported having attended seminars and training programmes that were held in some cases back to back with network meetings but are funded from other sources.

28.   **Communication facilities** must be improved. This is strongly recommended by both the Ozone Officers themselves and the evaluators. It is important to standardize the use of electronic mail by all National Ozone Units, distribute the documentation through e-mail, equip the Ozone Offices with appropriate anti-virus systems, transmit to the Ozone Offices relevant scientific and technical information, as well as information on decisions taken by the Executive Committee and the Meeting of the Parties. Since last year, UNEP has initiated the organization of such e-mail forums for all Regional Networks.

29.   **Cooperation with non-Article 5 countries:** Networks were also conceived with the aim of enhancing cooperation between Article 5 and non-Article 5 countries in order to mobilize support from the latter including the transfer of know how and technology appropriate to the conditions and problems of Article 5 countries. The participants from Article 5 countries have in their large majority attributed a positive role to the networks in facilitating their cooperation with non-Article 5 countries. Representatives of non-Article 5 countries have confirmed this.

(a)   Through SIDA, Sweden has been supporting the SEAP Network from the outset. Australia, too, is taking an active role in the proceedings of this Network;

(b)   In the case of the French-speaking African Sub-Network, France has been playing an active role, participating regularly in the meetings and providing funds through the Agence Française de Coopération for a number of bilateral projects in the region. Switzerland also participated actively in the Network Meetings;

(c)   In the English-speaking African Sub-Network, Germany is actively involved through the GTZ Proklima programme for the implementation of the Refrigeration Management Plans in 14 African countries;

(d)   In the case of the South Asian Network, the United Kingdom has participated in Network meetings as a member, while the Netherlands and Japan have agreed last year to become members.

(e)   The Caribbean Sub-Network is fully satisfied with Canada's participation, and expressed their aspiration for more constant participation from the United States (absent in meetings during 2000) and from the United Kingdom (which has participated in some meetings but is not a member). All Network members reported that cooperation for projects with Canada and the U.S.A. has proven to be highly beneficial in specific sectors (e.g. MAC projects with the U.S.A., RMPs with Canada);

(f)   The U.S.A. and Canada are also members of the South and Central American Sub-Networks. Participants reported that several resource persons and know how in alternative technologies and substances have been provided by these countries. It was also reported that several investment, training and capacity-building projects have been initiated and implemented in cooperation with these countries;

(g)   In the case of the West Asian Network, 50 per cent of the participants expressed the opinion that there is no cooperation between Art. 5 and non-Art. 5 countries, and no benefit has been identified so far. However, Germany participated in Network Meetings, supporting recently in particular initiatives for a regional halon bank.

30.   **Cooperation with Implementing Agencies and the Secretariat:** UNDP, UNIDO and the World Bank participate usually once a year in the main meetings of the networks. Their representatives have confirmed that the meetings provide useful occasions to discuss with the Ozone Officers on-going and future projects. Particularly for countries which are not regularly visited by the Implementing Agencies, or where the Ozone Officer is new, the network meetings are a cost-effective means to establish and maintain contacts between representatives of Implementing Agencies and Ozone Officers and to sort out problems in face-to-face discussions. Likewise, for the Secretariat, participation in network meetings provides a forum for establishing new contacts, getting recent information about situations in countries and regions, explaining

decisions and discussions of the Executive Committee and clarifying policy issues. In recent meetings, the emphasis is shifting from discussions about projects to a dialogue about national and regional policies, like for instance on compliance, legislation, monitoring of ODS consumption and trade controls, for which the networks provide a unique and useful forum. On the other hand, it is sometimes not easy for the Implementing Agencies and for the Secretariats to participate in all main network meetings due to their frequency and timing over the year. It is helpful in this respect if UNEP, as practiced to some extent already, would consult the Implementing Agencies and the Secretariats about the draft agenda and dates of network meetings in order to allow them to plan their participation and add topics to the agenda, as appropriate.

31. In several cases, the Regional Network Coordinator played an active role in assuring that Montreal Protocol related issues were placed on **the agenda of regional meetings of environment ministers** (e.g. in the 2000 Environment Ministerial Conference, Kitakyushu City, Japan, the Fifth Meeting of the intersessional Committee of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, Mexico City 2-3 October 2000, and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) Dakar, Senegal). The last two meetings approved specific action plans for the implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

V   Benefits and Weaknesses Perceived

32.   **Benefits of the Regional Networks:**   Summing up the results of the individual interviews and the group discussions across all Networks evaluated, a high degree of convergence of the answers has been registered. The following main benefits to be attributed to networking have been reported by the participants:

(a)   Access to relevant information thereby improving the preparedness and professional skills of the Ozone Officers;

(b)   Opportunity to learn about and follow up on decisions of the Executive Committee and the Meetings of the Parties;

(c)   Reminding participants of obligations and providing them with guidance;

(d)   Exchanging experiences and learning about "best practices" in other countries; peer pressure on slow-performing members as motivating force;

(e)   Increasing the level of knowledge related to the latest developments of technological alternatives to the use of ODS;

(f)   Opportunity for close cooperation with the Regional Network Coordinator and the Network Manager in terms of current issues and needs for advice;

(g)   Assisting Ozone Officers to identifying national and/or regional solutions to specific problems (e.g. regional halon banking in West Asia);

(h)   Providing a forum to develop personal contacts and strengthening cooperation with other Ozone Officers of the region;

(i)   Learning from experts or other members about conditions for success and failure in order to avoid pitfalls;

(j)   Opportunity for non-Article 5 countries to understand more the problems of Article 5 countries;

(k)   Allowing Implementing Agencies to meet Ozone Officers and to establish communication on current problems and procedures, and to discuss the preparation and implementation of projects;

(l)   Raising public awareness about ozone issues, particularly in the Article 5 country hosting a network meeting.

33.   **Weaknesses of the Regional Networks:** The problems or shortcomings which have been articulated by the participants relate partly to the difficulties faced when accomplishing their duties as Ozone Officers, and partly to some weaknesses of the Networks themselves. As to the first set of problems, reference was made to the low political priority of ozone issues in some countries, slowness of the legislation process, political or economic turbulence, etc. In such cases, the influence of Networks is rather limited. A number of these issues are reflected in the evaluation of institutional strengthening projects. Concerning the second set of problems which strictly relate to the Networks, the following issues were mentioned:

(a)   Insufficient communication facilities;

(b)   During the meetings, time allocated for listening to presentations is too long and too short for penetrating more profoundly into details of relevant issues;

(c)   Agenda of the meetings generally overloaded;

(d)   Absence of regular linkages or interactions with other Regional Networks;

(e)   Insufficient inter-meeting activities involving non-Article 5 countries;

(f)   Limited access to relevant information or documents from the Executive Committee;

(g)   Exchange of experiences regarding legislation is limited due to different legal systems;

(h)   Incomplete attendance to the Network meetings and, therefore, lack of continuity;

(i)   Lack of information and documents reaching members on time before the meetings to formulate their views and comments to be presented at the main meetings.

34.   **The points of criticism** mentioned by the participants indicate a double conclusion. Firstly, the list of weaknesses signals that there is room for improvement. Secondly, it reveals a critical and mature vision of the Network members. It has been observed that the pattern of positive and critical assessment regarding the issues listed above shows no significant differences across the individual Regional Networks.

VI   Budget, Cost-effectiveness and Sustainability

35.   It was not part of the terms of reference to analyze in detail the **management of the network's budget**, for which the Executive Committee has delegated the responsibility to UNEP (decision 21/4, para f). Nevertheless, it is important to make reference to the financial aspects of networking because the activities are being entirely funded by the Multilateral Fund, with the exception of the SEAP Network, which is financed by Sweden through SIDA (over and above its contributions to the MLF). UNEP is responsible for the overall programme and the management including accounting, audit, fund administration, travel processing, etc. UNEP levies a 13 per cent administration fee on all trust fund project expenditures.

36.   According to decision 21/4 of the Executive Committee at its 21st Meeting, the recurring costs of networking should be capped at **the funding level** approved for UNEP's 1996 Work Programme, equivalent to US $1.1 million. It was also decided that the level of funding would not be increased in the following years except by up to five per cent to cover inflation. The funds approved by the 32nd Executive Committee meeting for networking activities in 2001 were US $1.242 million. This was broken down for the different regions as follows:

Table 1

Regional Network	Costs in US $
Asia (South East Asia & Pacific, and South Asia)	225,000
Latin America (LAC South, LAC Central, LAC Caribbean)	429,000
Africa (French-speaking, English-speaking)	464,000
West Asia	124,000
Total	**1.242,000**

37.   **Total funds approved** for networking from 1994 to 2000 sum up to US $7.4 million (see Annex I). Funds are shown in UNEP's work programmes and are approved by region and not for each sub-network. In the case of South Asia and South East Asia, funds are approved within one project, although since 1998, two networks that are managed by two Regional Network Coordinators serve the region and moreover, Sweden finances the SEAP Network. The distinction between both regions should be made clearer in future UNEP work programmes.

38.   The **workload of the Regional Network Coordinators** in the various regions seems to be unevenly distributed, with the Regional Network Coordinators for Africa and Latin American and the Caribbean having the largest number of member countries and annual meetings to manage (see Annex I). While the evaluation did not analyze the issue in detail, UNEP/DTIE might undertake a review, considering the various tasks involved and the assistance available for each Regional Network Coordinator.

39.   As outlined in Section I above, there is unfortunately no methodology available to quantify the **cost-effectiveness of the networks**. The impact in terms of capacity building for National Ozone Units, policy development and acceleration of project preparation and implementation cannot be linked in clear and exclusive cause and effect relationships to the ODS phase out achieved and the compliance of members facilitated. A total cost of about US $1.2 million per year or US $11,500 per Article 5 member country is not negligible but remains at around 1% of the total funds approved per year and corresponds to about 30% of funding provided for institutional strengthening projects or 6 to 7% of all funds approved for non-investment projects. It remains a political judgement to determine the level and source of funding made available for it.

40.   Some individual evaluation reports raise the question concerning the **sustainability of the Networks** and advocate a move towards gradually increasing self-support of the networks, both in managerial and financial terms, by making reference to UNEP's 1995 Work Programme, which had described the managerial support for the networks as a temporary need. However, the Executive Committee has never formulated as an objective of the networks that they should become financially self-sustainable. Secondly, almost all Article 5 members of the networks interviewed declared that their countries are not in the position to make any relevant contribution to the funding of the networks' activities. Contributions by member countries are generally limited to in-kind contributions by the country hosting a meeting. Thus, the continuity of the networks depends fully on further financing from the Multilateral Fund and the Government of Sweden for the SEAP Network. Continued managerial support through UNEP's staff seems also to be the only viable option in a situation where a neutral institution has to manage the funds provided by the Multilateral Fund for the networks' operation, and where the workload of the Ozone Officers is such that nobody would volunteer to take on the responsibility of coordinating a network, which requires presently at least one professional per region plus secretarial assistance.

VII   Overall Assessment

41.   With regard to **main results achieved**, all evaluation reports agree that the networks have made an important contribution to the improvement of the conditions for achieving the objectives of the Montreal Protocol, particularly through the interpretation of policy decisions, the transfer of knowledge on ODS alternatives, and the mutual learning effects derived from the exchange of experiences. Generally, Article 5 countries have progressed with respect to administrative, data collecting and reporting duties. Efforts were made to improve the impact in other important areas such as import licensing, monitoring of ODS trade and consumption, and dealing with problems of small- and medium-sized enterprises and the servicing sector.

Networks have evolved throughout the years to gradually become more engaged in substantive issues such as project preparation, policy discussions and country compliance reports.

42.   Most Ozone Officers who participated in the Network meetings attributed a significant or at least important effect to the Networks in upgrading their professional skills. At the meetings, a **high average level of professional knowledge and experience** could be observed which significantly exceeded the level registered at the time when the Networks started.   In the compliance period, the tasks are becoming more complicated. During the coming years, the implementation of the Montreal Protocol will need increasing national efforts in the fields of legislation, import controls, monitoring and awareness raising.   Accordingly, these new challenges will require intensive capacity building, transfer of skills and knowledge, and exchange of experiences within and among regions.

43.   Efforts to improve the **consistency of objectives** relating them more clearly to the Montreal Protocol targets and developing specific objectives and work programmes for each Network are still in an early stage. The Networks would benefit from making further efforts to define concrete targets, related results, and indicators to measure their achievement and time schedules for the short- and medium-term perspectives. It would also be important to discuss such an approach with the Network members in order to bring about a creative, participatory and transparent process. According to UNEP's 2001 Work Programme, a detailed table of Network objectives will be elaborated for the final business plan and presented to the Executive Committee early in 2001.

44.   With respect to **meeting procedures**, most evaluation reports agree that, generally, time is too short and the agenda is too full for penetrating more profoundly into the details of all the issues to be treated. Some valuable time could be saved if meeting activities would be refocused to avoid ritualized routines and repetitive subjects and presentations, especially of country reports by all members. Instead, problem-oriented discussions of particular aspects of such reports, discussions of two or three country reports only at each session, and/or discussions in smaller groups, should be envisaged.

45.   **Activities between meetings** and exchanges between the Regional Network Coordinators and the Ozone Officers and the Ozone Officers themselves occur to some extent, although not regularly, and the focus is still on the Network meetings. An essential means to improve the interaction in the time between meetings is the advancement of electronic communication between the Ozone Officers, Regional Network Coordinators and the Network Manager. The full installation of an e-mail forum and web site for all Networks will improve and facilitate overall communication.

46.   One of the problems frequently mentioned is the **heterogeneous composition** of the Network meetings. This is due partly to the fact that a few countries do not regularly participate in the meetings or the National Ozone Unit sends different representatives, and partly to a significant turnover of Ozone Officers resulting in ever-new faces participating for the first time in Network meetings.   While the example set by more experienced Ozone Officers is very

important and creates a significant training effect, some additional measures would be helpful to rapidly increase and balance the level of competence of the participants.

47.   The dedication and professional **performance of the Network Management** (Network Manager and Regional Network Coordinators) during and between the meetings has been frequently and explicitly recognized.

48.   Networks have proven to constitute a useful forum for **communication and cooperation with Implementing Agencies as well as Non-Article 5 countries.** Participants of the network meetings obtain relevant information about implementation guidelines and procedures of agencies while the latter learn about problems or difficulties of the countries represented in the meetings.   Non-Article 5 countries provided frequently resource persons and a number of bilateral projects originated from discussions and contacts in network meetings.

VIII   Recommendations

49.   **Continue the formulation and refinement of objectives, sub-objectives, related results and indicators** for the networks as a whole and for each region, in a short- and medium-term perspective. This exercise should be further developed with the members of the Networks based on proposals made by the Network Manager and the Regional Network Coordinators in UNEP's Work Programme 2001.

50.   Arrangements should be made that prior to network meetings participants are well prepared**.** They should, therefore, receive a) the detailed annotated agenda, b) all country reports to be dealt with at the meeting, and c) issues that must be decided by the end of the meeting. This would not only **enable the participants to prepare themselves better for the meeting,** but it would also save time for discussion. Country progress reports should focus more on specific problems or lessons learnt and be presented and discussed issue-by-issue and not country-by-country, as practiced already in some network meetings in 2000.

51.   **Documentation** of the Executive Committee and the Meeting of the Parties should be made accessible to all Ozone Officers via mail, e-mail and/or the respective web sites of UNEP, the Multilateral Fund Secretariat and the Ozone Secretariat. While this is already done for the final reports of the meetings, Ozone Officers should address themselves to representatives of their constituency in the Executive Committee to obtain further meeting documentation and information on matters raised and issues discussed at the meetings, as needed.

52.   In order to facilitate more exchange and interaction in the periods between the meetings, the on-going development of **an e-mail forum and a web site of the networks** should be rapidly completed and its functioning be demonstrated at forthcoming network meetings. This could significantly contribute to the improvement of communication and cooperation among Network members.

53.   **Follow-up meetings** should be more technical in nature than main meetings, and should be combined with training programmes or workshops addressing specific subjects (as done in

Asia in 2000 with a workshop on monitoring of ODS consumption and trade) and/or be held with members of a more homogeneous sub-region only. They should work as expert groups on detailed problem solving and concrete advice to the participating members, and on the development of regional solutions to problems, for example, with regard to controlling ODS imports, and in particular, illegal trade.

54.   While it is customary to elect the National Ozone Unit Officer of the host country as a Chairperson for the network meeting, especially to chair the opening ceremonial session, **facilitators** should be identified to chair or to facilitate the discussion at sessions of the meeting on substantive issues. Meeting places or venues should be selected as much as possible, with a view to enable round table discussions after the opening part is over.

55.   Network meetings could also be held **back-to-back with meetings of environment ministers and senior officials** in the regions, in order to raise the political awareness concerning ozone issues in the region and to promote policy discussions on regional approaches, for example, with regard to trade regulations and controls of licensed and illegal imports.

56.   **Tutorships for new Ozone Officers** by representatives of more advanced National Ozone Units, as well as the organization of specific training programmes should become an even more regular feature of network activities. This should include visits of Regional Network Coordinators to National Ozone Units in difficulties as necessary and practiced successfully in some cases in 2000.

57.   **More intensive contacts and information exchange between different networks** should be encouraged and facilitated. It is recommended to invite Ozone Officers with particular experience in a given field of action to meetings of other regional networks (as started in 2000), or a Network Coordinator from another network, or a resource person such as a customs officer, a legal counsellor or a representative of an industry association to report on experiences and to stimulate discussions on common issues under different political, economic or legal conditions in another region.

58.   **Strengthen sub-regional cooperation** for common problems being faced that can be treated by joint action. Greater emphasis should be laid on interaction of countries with similar conditions and problems, for example, South Africa and its neighbours, the Maghreb or the Arab Gulf countries, small islands or CFC-producer countries.

59.   **Meeting recommendations should be carefully drafted and systematically followed up** and their implementation closely monitored, avoiding at the same time to dress up wish lists as recommendations. The procedure for report writing should be revised in order to include a permanent section about follow-up actions. Such actions should be reviewed in the following meeting.

60.   **The networks should continue to provide a forum** in their region where Implementing Agencies, the Secretariat and non-Article 5 countries meet Ozone Officers and discuss and

clarify issues related to projects and policies, share and update information and exchange feedback on each others' perceptions, actions and concerns.

61.   UNEP, as practiced to some extent already, should consult the Implementing Agencies and the Secretariats about the **draft agenda and dates of network meetings** in order to allow them to plan their participation and add topics to the agenda, as appropriate.

62.   **UNEP, through its Regional Offices**, should help to mainstream the ozone issues into the general environmental agenda of Article 5 countries, particularly through their Regional Directors when visiting high level government officials, including Ministers of Environment in countries within their respective regions. The Regional Network Coordinators are well placed to provide the necessary briefing for such discussions.

Members of Regional Networks

Region	Article 5 Countries	Non-Article 5 Countries
South East Asian Pacific (SEAP) Sub-Network	Brunei, Fiji, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam (= 10 members)	Australia, Sweden
South Asia Sub-Network	Bangladesh, China, Iran, India, Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka (= 11 members)	Netherlands United Kingdom
West Asian Region Network	Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Yemen (= 10 members)	France, Germany
Southern Latin America Network	Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela (= 10 members)	Canada, U.S.A.
Central American Network	Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama (= 9 members)	Canada, U.S.A.
Caribbean Network	Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Surinam, Trinidad & Tobago (= 14 members)	Canada, U.S.A.
English-speaking African Network	Botswana, Egypt, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Seychelles, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe (= 22 members)	Germany
French-speaking African Networks	Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo Democratic Republic, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Tunisia, Zaire (= 22 members)	France, Switzerland

Funding Approved for Regional Networks from 1994 to 2000 (according to the inventory)*

Region	Code	Sub-region**	Status ***	Year Approved	Total Funds Approved As Per Inventory	Funds Disbursed As Per 1999 Progress Report****
AFRICA	AFR/SEV/12/TAS/09	English- and French-speaking countries	COM	1994	180,000	180,000
	AFR/SEV/16/TAS/20	English- and French-speaking countries	FIN	1995	232,200	232,200
	AFR/SEV/19/TAS/17	African Networks	FIN	1996	299,400	299,400
	AFR/SEV/21/TAS/19	English- and French-speaking countries	COM	1997	377,656	377,656
	AFR/SEV/23/TAS/21	English- and French-speaking countries	COM	1997	409,631	409,631
	AFR/SEV/26/TAS/22	English- and French-speaking countries	ONG	1998	431,000	341,148
	AFR/SEV/29/TAS/25	English- and French-speaking countries	ONG	1999	452,550	0
	AFR/SEV/32/TAS/27	English -and French-speaking countries	ONG	2000	464,000	0
ASIA PACIFIC	ASP/SEV/16/TAS/17	SEAP	COM	1995	62,000	62,000
	ASP/SEV/19/TAS/21	Networking and Training	FIN	1996	40,000	40,000
	ASP/SEV/19/TAS/22	West Asia	COM	1996	144,877	144,877
	ASP/SEV/21/TAS/23	West Asia	FIN	1997	110,000	110,000
	ASP/SEV/21/TAS/24	South Asia	COM	1997	89,050	89,050
	ASP/SEV/23/TAS/25	SEAP and East Asia	COM	1997	160,396	160,396
	ASP/SEV/23/TAS/26	West Asia	FIN	1997	115,000	115,000
	ASP/SEV/26/TAS/27	SEAP and South Asia	ONG	1998	209,000	147,657
	ASP/SEV/26/TAS/28	West Asia	FIN	1998	115,000	115,000
	ASP/SEV/29/TAS/30	SEAP and South Asia	ONG	1999	219,450	0
	ASP/SEV/29/TAS/32	West Asia	ONG	1999	120,750	0
	ASP/SEV/32/TAS/40	West Asia	ONG	2000	124,000	0
	ASP/SEV/32/TAS/41	South East Asia and the Pacific and South Asia	ONG	2000	225,000	0
LAC	LAC/SEV/09/TAS/07	South American countries	COM	1993	130,000	121,000
	LAC/SEV/12/TAS/08	ODSONET/LAS and ODSONET/LAC (Spanish-speaking countries)	COM	1994	224,000	209,500
	LAC/SEV/16/TAS/11	ODS Officers' Network for LAC	COM	1995	299,000	299,000
	LAC/SEV/19/TAS/23	Latin America (including English-speaking Caribbean)	COM	1996	241,833	241,833
	LAC/SEV/21/TAS/24	South America, Spanish-speaking countries	COM	1997	341,907	341,907
	LAC/SEV/23/TAS/25	South America, Central America, and the Caribbean	COM	1997	345,676	345,676
	LAC/SEV/26/TAS/29	South America, Central America, and the Caribbean	COM	1998	399,000	229,339
	LAC/SEV/29/TAS/33	South America, Central America, and the Caribbean	ONG	1999	418,950	0
	LAC/SEV/32/TAS/35	South American, Central American and the Caribbean regional networks	ONG	2000	429,000	0
GLOBAL	GLO/SEV/09/TAS/33	Training Materials	FIN	1993	30,000	30,000
Total					7,440,326	4,536,804

*In addition, Sweden provides funding of about US $250,000 per year for the SEAP Network, over and above its contributions to the Multilateral Fund.

**Funding is approved and reported upon by region and not for individual networks.

***COM = declared as completed in the Progress Report by the IA; FIN = Financially completed; ONG = On-going

****The figures for Latin America and the Caribbean have been updated by data UNEP provided for the Report on Completed Projects with Balances presented to the 33rd Executive Committee (document UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/33/15).

Capacity Building Effects of the Regional Networks Evaluated*

Issues	Very significant effects	Important effects	Some positive effects	No effects	No answer	Average rating**	N***
Reporting	43	26	5	1	3	2,4	78
Drafting of legal rules	19	28	23	7	2	1,7	79
Monitoring trade & consumption	20	27	24	7	2	1,7	80
Import licensing	26	25	16	8	3	1,8	78
System of fiscal incentives	6	19	16	27	3	1,0	71
Problem of SMEs	10	18	19	20	2	1,2	69
Servicing sector	14	30	21	11	2	1,5	78
Data collection	38	24	12	3	2	2,2	79
Public awareness	40	25	11	2	3	2,2	81
Know-how in alternative technologies and substances	29	28	8	4	2	2,1	71
Total number of ratings	**245**	**250**	**155**	**90**	**24**		
In per cent	**33,1%**	**33,8%**	**20,8%**	**12,2%**	**--**	**--**	

*Total number of responses to the questionnaire.

**"Very significant effects" has been weighted by the factor 3, "important effects" by 2, "some positive effects" by 1 and "no effects" by 0. Thus the maximum average rating value is 3, the minimum is 0. The category "no answer" is not included in the rating.

***N = total number of test persons who completed the questionnaire. The numbers differ in some cases due to unclear or invalid answers.