

Report of the Chemical Review Committee on the work of its first meeting

Annex V

Rationales for conclusions by the Committee that notifications had met the criteria of the Annex II of the Rotterdam Convention

E. Notification for carbon tetrachloride (CAS No 56-23-5) from Canada

31. In reviewing the notification of final regulatory action by Canada to severely restrict carbon tetrachloride, together with the supporting documentary information provided by the Party, the Committee was able to confirm that the action had been taken in order to protect the environment. Key to the regulatory actions taken was Canada's conclusion that carbon tetrachloride had an ozone-depleting potential and created indirect hazards via the environment. Stratospheric ozone depletion leads to an increase in the intensity of UV-B rays that reach the earth's surface, where they can disrupt important biological processes and affect air quality. The most basic impact for humans is the increase in skin cancers, but can also cause eye damage, and may weaken the immune system. In the Canadian Arctic, UV levels can increase substantially from season to season, owing to the hole in the ozone layer, which is caused by ozone-depleting substances, such as carbon tetrachloride.

32. On that basis, the Committee established that the final regulatory action had been taken as a consequence of risk evaluation. In addition, the evaluation had been based on a review of scientific data in the context of the conditions prevailing in Canada. The supporting documentation (UNEP assessment report) indicated that the data had been generated in accordance with scientifically recognized methods, and that the data reviews had been performed and documented in accordance with generally recognized scientific principles and procedures. Other supporting documentation also showed that the final regulatory action had been based on chemical-specific risk evaluations taking into account the conditions of exposure within Canada.

33. As an industrial chemical, it was mainly used in the synthesis of chlorofluoromethane (chemical feedstock), and also, in smaller quantities, in fire extinguishers, as a dry-cleaning agent, in pharmaceuticals, paints and solvents. As a pesticide, it was used as a fumigant to control insect pests in stored grains and garments.

34. The regulatory action taken in Canada prohibits the manufacture, use, sale, import or export of carbon tetrachloride, except for certain limited uses. It was therefore considered that the severe restriction had led to a significant decrease in the quantities of the chemicals used in Canada. Hence, the risk for human health or environment in the notifying Party has been significantly reduced.

35. The Committee also took into account that the considerations underlying the final regulatory action were not of limited applicability since carbon tetrachloride caused a global environmental problem. On the basis of information provided to the

members at the first session of the Chemical Review Committee and other available information, the Committee concluded also that there was evidence of ongoing international trade in carbon tetrachloride.

36. The Committee noted that the final regulatory action was not based on concerns about intentional misuse of carbon tetrachloride.

37. At its first session, the Committee concluded that the notification of final regulatory action by Canada met the information requirements of Annex I and the criteria set out in Annex II to the Convention.

