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Thailand signed a USD\$23 million grant agreement with the World Bank Group today to help make Thai air conditioning and foam products more climate friendly. The funds will help local manufacturers convert their production processes to make air conditioning and foam products that destroy less ozone, in line with international good practice.
Thailand is the second-largest producer of air conditioners and foam in the world and is considered a key global supplier and leader. Thailand manufactures approximately 12 million air conditioners annually - the worlds second biggest producer after China - of which about 90% are exported. Thailand is also one of the 10 largest importers and consumers of HCFCs, importing more than 18,000 metric tonnes of HCFCs in 2012.
The grant is from the Ozone Projects Trust Fund of the Montreal Protocol and provides Thailand with US\$23.9 million or approximately 760 million Thai Baht to reduce hydro-chloro-fluorocarbon (HCFC) gases used in manufacturing processes. Funding will be provided to eligible enterprises in Thailand including 12 air-conditioner manufacturers and more than 120 foam enterprises.
"The Thailand Ministry of Finance has taken the role in supporting green growth and economic development towards sustainability," said Director-General Kritsda Udyanin, Public Debt Management Office. "One of the measures is to cooperate with international organization like the World Bank on Grant and Technical Assistance. We hope this fund will be efficiently utilized and effectively support enterprises and manufacturing in Thailand to develop their technology consistent with the global trend toward a green economy."
The World Bank administered grant funding will help reduce HCFC consumption in the air-conditioning and foam sectors and significantly contribute to Thailand's efforts to meet its HCFC consumption phase-out obligations as agreed under the international environmental treaty - The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Specifically, the new grant will enable Thailand to reduce its consumption of HCFCs by 15 percent; and achieve climate benefits by reducing carbon emissions through the use of lower global warming potential (GWP) refrigerant and foam blowing agents and through improvement in energy efficiency of air-conditioning units.
"Energy efficiency and climate protection are priorities in Thailand. In line with Thailand's green growth policy, application of new climate-friendly air conditioning and foam technologies will enhance Thai industries competitiveness in markets that increasingly demand climate friendly and energy efficient products," said Ulrich Zachau, Country Director for Thailand, World Bank Group. "Business and technology investment using these funds will protect the earth's ozone layer and the climate, and they will also promote sustained growth and jobs in one of Thailand's leading industries."
The grant will be jointly executed by Thailand's Department of Industrial Works and the Government Savings Bank.

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