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In this issue:

- 1- [UNEP Launches 2004/5 GEO Yearbook](#)
- 2- [US reaches agreement with Jewel Food Stores](#)
- 3- [CFC import ban aim in five years \(Thailand\)](#)
- 4- [French supermarkets turn to ice slurries](#)

GLOBAL

1- UNEP Launches 2004/5 GEO Yearbook the Global Environment Outlook Year Book 2004/2005 An Overview of our Changing Environment

... The set of GEO indicators gives a compact, illustrated overview of global trends in major issues related to the environment, depicting changes over the last years. The selected data are a mix of environmental pressures, states, impacts and responses.

The overall data situation continues to improve steadily – if slowly – although many data gaps and shortcomings still persist. The availability of data on threatened species and ozone depleting substances has significantly improved recently. Many data sets have been updated during the year – including the use of energy resources, carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, protected areas and catch of living marine resources. Others are updated on a more occasional basis. Currently the most problematic data are those for consumption and quality of freshwater, household and other wastes, urban air pollution, forest cover change, land degradation, and data related to coastal and marine areas.

The graphics incorporate the most recent year for which data are available. Compared to the GEO Year Book 2003, indicators have been added for renewable energy supply, consumption of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and methyl bromide, marine protected areas, freshwater quality and urban air pollution. The indicators for use of freshwater and forest cover were not included this year, because there are no new comprehensive data available.

In the course of 2004, the set of GEO indicators was reviewed as part of an assessment of sustainability indicators by a consortium of the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE), UNEP, the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP) and the European Environment Agency. Where possible, the recommendations of the review have been reflected in the current key set. The indicators are grouped by thematic areas and environmental issues. Where appropriate the corresponding indicator for the environmental targets of the Goals in the Millennium Declaration is given. Definitions of terms used, information sources and technical notes are provided in an Annex. The data are presented at the global, regional and, in a few cases, sub-regional level, based on the regional classification used in the GEO assessment (UNEP 2002). All data and documentation have been extracted from the GEO Data Portal, which holds the reference database for use in the GEO assessment and reporting process <http://geodata.grid.unep.ch/>

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[http://www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GEO_YEARBOOK_2004_\(ENG\).pdf](http://www.unep.org/GC/GC23/documents/GEO_YEARBOOK_2004_(ENG).pdf)

Source: United Nations Environment Programme, Press Release, 21 February 2005

Visit The 23rd Session of the Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC-23/GMEF) 21-25 February 2005, Nairobi <http://www.unep.org/gc/gc23/MDG-flash.asp>

[Top](#)

NORTH AMERICA

2- US Reaches Agreement with Jewel Food Stores

Washington, D.C. - **The Justice Department and the Environmental Protection Agency today announced they have reached an agreement with Jewel Food Stores, Inc. to resolve alleged violations of federal regulations to protect stratospheric ozone.**

Under the agreement filed in the federal district court in Chicago, Jewel will take steps that will prevent over 145,000 pounds of future releases of ozone-depleting refrigerants - such as chlorofluorocarbons, known as "CFCs" - that destroy stratospheric or "good" ozone. Jewel will retrofit at least 37 of its supermarkets in and around Chicago with systems that use non-ozone-depleting refrigerants by the year 2007. In addition, the company agreed that, in any new stores built in and around Chicago after the agreement takes effect, it will only install commercial refrigeration units that use an EPA-approved non-ozone-depleting refrigerant. Jewel will also retrofit any unit that has more than three significant leaks in a year in any of its other stores. **The company will also pay a civil penalty of \$100,000 for alleged past leaks of ozone-depleting refrigerants.**

"Today's agreement demonstrates our continued commitment to the strong enforcement of our nation's environmental laws," said Tom Sansonetti, Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division. **"The actions Jewel has agreed to will help protect the ozone layer, ensuring a safer environment for our future generations."**

"We commend Jewel for agreeing to make improvements to its refrigeration systems," said Acting EPA Region 5 Administrator Bharat Mathur. "Through these environmental efforts Jewel has demonstrated its willingness to be a good corporate citizen."

Other steps include Jewel's implementation of a company-specific, EPA approved refrigerant management plan to ensure compliance with the regulations governing ozone-depleting refrigerants.

The agreement resolves a complaint alleging that Jewel violated EPA commercial refrigerant leak repair, testing, recordkeeping and reporting regulations. This is EPA's second and largest settlement with a grocery store and the second settlement under the commercial refrigerant leak repair regulations of the Clean Air Act.

When CFC refrigerants deplete the stratospheric ozone layer, dangerous amounts of cancer-causing ultraviolet rays from the sun strike the earth. Production of some of these chemicals was stopped in 1995, and federal law strictly controls their use and handling. The agreement will be subject to a 30-day public comment period.

Source: US Department of Justice, Press Release, 9 February 2005

http://www.usdoj.gov/opa/pr/2005/February/05_enrd_055.htm

SOUTH EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC

3- CFC import ban aim in five years

Thailand will ban the import of chlorofluorocarbons, better known as CFCs, a chemical used mainly in air-conditioners, within five years, caretaker Deputy Transport Minister said yesterday, Mr Nikorn said Thailand imported 1,358 tonnes of CFCs last year, 80% used in air-conditioners mainly found in older-model public buses. Thailand is aiming to end CFC imports by 2010 in accordance with the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, which Thailand ratified 17 years ago. **The Transport Ministry last month ordered that new private cars and buses which use CFCs in their air-conditioners be denied registration. 'Such an ozone-depleting substance is no longer acceptable in the country's transport sector,'** Mr Nikorn said. The action is part of Thailand's attempt to show support for the Kyoto Protocol, an international pact to combat global warming.

In a joint press conference with caretaker Environment and Natural Resources Minister Suvit Khunkitti to mark Wednesday's enforcement of the Kyoto pact, Mr Nikorn said the Transport Ministry would make further efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The transport sector ranks second after the energy sector for emitting the most greenhouse gases.

The further measures include promoting gasohol which emits less greenhouse gases than fossil fuels, introducing CFC substitutes and phasing out old vehicles that use CFCs.

"We will also inspect car garages, where artificial CFCs are used in outdated car air-conditioners," said Mr Nikorn, adding that staff had confiscated large quantities of artificial CFCs, which can be hazardous. Mr Suvit said the country emits 3.5 million tonnes of greenhouse gases annually, while the world average was 3.9 million tonnes.

Several industrialised countries which have to cut emissions have sent proposals to start emission trading with Thailand. Under the Kyoto Protocol, industrialised countries can achieve emission reduction targets by investing in clean technology or reforestation in developing countries as if they were reducing it themselves.

Source: The Bangkok Post, 18 February 2005, <http://www.bangkokpost.com/>

EUROPE

4- French supermarkets turn to ice slurries

- Carrefour 's Collégien, France, hypermarket is using indirect refrigeration for over 6100 m² out of a total 15 000 m² surface area: CO₂ (in a 4-loop system) for temperatures below 0°C (refrigerating capacity: 232 kW) and ice slurries (generated at night and used during the day) for temperatures above 0°C (refrigerating capacity: 872 kW). The refrigerant used is R-404A. **The ice-slurry plant requires 3.5 times less refrigerant than previously used systems, requires less defrosting and is costing less** thanks to lower power consumption (peaking capacity: 324 kW instead of 462 kW in a classic direct-expansion system).

- **An ice-slurry system involving nocturnal slurry production is enabling Auchan to achieve peak shaving in its hypermarket in St. Etienne, France. Refrigerating systems account for 40-70% of total power consumption in hypermarkets and daytime use of slurry produced at night generates considerable savings. The ice-slurry loop remains at a relatively stable temperature of -6°C.** Another energy-saving feature: all refrigerating systems can be automatically turned off when other systems such as the bakery ovens raise power consumption.

HK Refrigeration designed and installed the systems used in both hypermarkets.

Source: International Institute of Refrigeration Quoting : Revue Pratique du Froid, May 2004:
<http://www.iifiir.org/2enactutechno.php>

[Top](#)

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Prepared by: Samira de Gobert, Information Assistant
Reviewed by: Jim Curlin, Information Manager

If you wish to submit articles or you want to discontinue receiving this update, please contact:
Mrs. Samira de Gobert, Tel. (+33) 1 44.37.14.52 Email: sdegobert@unep.fr