

16 September 2005



'ACT OZONE FRIENDLY -- STAY SUN SAFE'

Message by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer, 16 September 2005:

In this historic year for the United Nations, it is worth reflecting on one of the undoubted success stories of international cooperation. Twenty years ago, governments signed the Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer -- the thin layer of gas that protects all life on Earth from the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation from space -- setting into motion a process of global collaboration that has seen significant progress in addressing a major threat to human and environmental health worldwide. The Vienna Convention and its Montreal Protocol exemplify the value of the United Nations in mobilizing and coordinating multilateral action to address global issues. Only through such action can we hope to meet the many challenges the world currently faces.

One of the keys to the effectiveness of the Montreal Protocol is the Multilateral Fund, founded 15 years ago. Based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, the Fund has supported activities worth more than \$1.5 billion, thereby helping more than 130 developing countries to achieve strict obligations under the Montreal Protocol to reduce their production and consumption of ozone-depleting substances. Moreover, the Fund has demonstrated vividly that, with appropriate support, all countries can play a significant role in solving global environmental problems.

I congratulate all 189 Parties to the Montreal Protocol for their commitment to environmental sustainability. To date, they have permanently eliminated more than 1.5 million tonnes of annual production of chemicals that destroy the ozone layer. That does not mean, however, that all the work has been done, or that the results of ozone depletion have been totally corrected. Developing countries are only at the half-way point in many of their obligations, while in the developed countries a number of chemicals still need to be phased out.

Furthermore, because of the historic use of ozone-depleting compounds, the ozone layer has become thinner in most places in the world. It is essential that we remain alert to this hazard to avoid an increase in skin cancers, cataracts and other health threats. For this reason, the theme of this year's International Day is "Act Ozone Friendly -- Stay Sun Safe". If all citizens of the world follow these simple words, we can protect public health and accelerate the day when the ozone layer will be healed.

[Arabic](#) | [Chinese](#) | [English](#) | [French](#) | [Spanish](#) |

International Ozone Day to mark the signing of Montreal Protocol on 16 September; Vienna Convention to celebrate two decades of protecting the ozone layer on 21 September; "An extraordinary success story - but saving ozone layer an unfinished business," says UNEP



Nairobi/Paris/Vienna, 13 September 2005 - The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and governments around the world are preparing to celebrate two key milestones on the road to recovery for the world's stratospheric ozone layer: the Montreal Protocol and the Vienna Convention.

"The campaign to protect the ozone layer represents an extraordinary success story - but until emissions of CFCs and other ozone-depleting substances are reduced to zero, saving the ozone layer will remain an unfinished business," said UNEP Executive Director Klaus Toepfer. This year's Ozone Day theme is "Act Ozone Friendly - Stay Sun Safe".

Although levels of ozone-depleting substances in the stratosphere now seem to be at or near their peak, the ozone layer will remain particularly vulnerable during the next decade or so. People must therefore be reminded to protect themselves and their children against the increased ultraviolet radiation reaching the Earth's surface, which can cause skin cancer, cataracts and other illnesses. The signing of the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer on March 1985 when nations agreed in principle to tackle a global environmental problem will be marked in Vienna by two events. On 19 September, a seminar in Vienna on ozone science, negotiations, technologies and funding will feature Nobel Laureate Mario Molina, former UNEP Executive Director Mustafa Tolba, and former Multilateral Fund Chief Officer Omar El-Arini.

On 21 September the Government of Austria will host an awards ceremony recognizing the contributions of diplomats and scientists who contributed to the Vienna Convention's development. Mr. Toepfer and World Meteorological Organization Secretary-General Michel Jarraud will present the awards.

The signing of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer on 16 September 1987, now celebrated every year as the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer, will be marked around the world. The Protocol builds on the general framework set out in the Convention by elaborating detailed phase-out schedules for CFCs and other ozone-depleting substances.

Celebrations of International Ozone Day are being organized by governments worldwide, for example:

- + Mexico has organized an event to mark the closure of the Quimobasicos CFC production facilities, the largest manufacturer of CFCs in Latin America. This historic closure results in the total elimination of the country's CFC production, the reduction of Latin America's production to 60 percent, and the dropping of global output by 12 to 13 percent.
- + China's celebration in Shenzhen city will focus on ozone protection in cities and towns.
- + The United States is celebrating using this year's theme with a "Sun Safety Summit for Skin Cancer Prevention" co-hosted by the US Environmental Protection Agency, the Center for Disease Prevention and the National Council on Skin Cancer prevention.
- + The French Ministry of Ecology and Development will organize a seminar in Paris on "Ozone, Climate Change and Mobility" that will be open to the public and will feature leading international experts.
- + In Mauritius, the Minister of Environment & National Development and the Minister of Information Technology together with UNEP will host a press conference where a new UNEP educational web site for children will have its global launch (www.ozzyozone.org).
- + Indonesia is organizing a Regional Ozone Day for South-East Asia and the Pacific, involving celebrations with the Diplomatic Corps from the respective countries.

The private sector is also getting into the action. For example, India's largest international carrier, Air India, and one of the country's leading banks, the Bank of Maharashtra, are hosting outreach events and producing awareness materials.

In addition, UNEP's OzonAction Programme, which provides technical and training services to assist developing countries with meeting their compliance commitments under the Protocol, is supporting this year's celebrations through:

+ Two new 30-second radio spots reinforcing the message of the "Ozzy Ozone" story are being distributed around the world in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

+ Three new short public service television announcements are being distributed around the world in English, French and Spanish: "Ozzy and Isabella", "Buy Ozone Friendly Products" and a short advertisement on the "Ozzy Ozone" video.

+ Airlines that travel close to the stratosphere have been encouraged to show UNEP's Ozzy Ozone video as part of in-flight entertainment; so far Air India, British West Indies Airline and Air Mauritius have agreed to show the video during September. (In addition, Air India has produced a special issue of its in-flight magazine "Namsakaar" on ozone layer protection with the potential for reaching some one million passengers.)

+ A new cartoon booklet for children featuring the Ozzy Ozone character, "Ozzy Ozone, Defender of Our Planet". The booklet is suitable for distribution in schools and will be available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish.

Note to journalists: For more information, including resources and ideas for celebrating International Ozone Day, see <http://www.unep.org/ozone/Events/ozoneday-2005.asp> and <http://www.uneptie.org/ozonaction/events/ozoneday/2005main.htm>

For more information contact: Michael Williams, UNEP Information Officer on +41229178242, +41 79409 1528, michael.williams@unep.ch or Robert Bisset, UNEP Spokesperson for Europe on +33 144377613, +33 622725842, email: robert.bisset@unep.fr

In Nairobi, contact: Nick Nuttall, UNEP Spokesperson, Office of the Executive Director, on Tel: +25420623084; Mobile: +254733 632 755, email: nick.nuttall@unep.org

If there is no prompt response, contact Elisabeth Waechter, UNEP Associate Media Officer, on +25420623088, Mob: +254720173968, email: elisabeth.waechter@unep.org

[English](#) | [French](#) | [Spanish](#) |



See What countries and UNEP are doing to celebrate ozone day

>>> <http://www.uneptie.org/ozonaction/events/ozoneday/main.html>

The United Nations Environment Programme Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP DTIE) OzonAction Programme provides OzoNews as a free service for internal, non-commercial use by members of the Montreal Protocol community. The goal of OzoNews is to provide current news relating to ozone depletion and the implementation of the Montreal Protocol, to stimulate discussion and promote cooperation in support of compliance with the Montreal Protocol. With the exception of items written by UNEP and occasional contributions solicited from other organizations, the news is sourced from on-line newspapers, journals and websites. The views expressed in articles written by external authors are solely the viewpoints of those authors and do

not represent the policy or viewpoint of UNEP. While UNEP strives to avoid inclusion of misleading or inaccurate information, it is ultimately the responsibility of the reader to evaluate the accuracy of any news article in OzoNews. The citing of commercial technologies, products or services does not constitute endorsement of those items by UNEP.

If you have questions or comments regarding any news item, please contact the source indicated at the bottom of each article directly.

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