

Commemoration of the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer – Celebrating '32 Years and Healing' – Kingdom of Tonga

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[Head of the National Ozone Unit, Mr. Uikelotu Vunga, teachers and students of the Hilliard Memorial School and guests](#)

16th September, 2019 The National Ozone Unit under the Department of Climate Change of MEIDECC commemorated the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer under the theme '32 Years and Healing', this morning at Hilliard Memorial School.

The International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer has been observed every year since 1994, to mark the signing of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, which took place on the 16th September 1987. This year marks the 32th anniversary of the Montreal Protocol.



Marking the 32th anniversary of the Montreal Protocol by one of the students

Head of the National Ozone Unit, Mr. Uikelotu Vunga said, it is indeed a blessing for the Kingdom of Tonga to join other islands in the Pacific as well as most industrial countries in the world in commemorating this momentous day.

“Ozone is not just a layer, but a great guardian of all existence under the sun. Hence a world without ozone is like a house built without a roof. It is our obligation to guarantee this shield is confined from deterioration due to illegal trades and unsafe handling of ozone depleting substances (ODS).”

The Montreal Protocol is signed by 197 countries including Tonga.

“This year’s World Ozone Day theme is “32 Years and Healing”. It signifies the successes we have accomplished in combating the destruction of the ozone layer for the past three decades, under the assistance of the Montreal Protocol.”



Mr. Uikelotu Vunga

He said the healing of the ozone is the prize of remarkable international co-operations with the Montreal Protocol by reminding us to keep a healthy people living in a healthy planet.

“The Montreal Protocol has led to the phase-out of 99 per cent of ozone-depleting chemicals in refrigerators, air-conditioners and many other products. The latest Scientific Assessment of Ozone Depletion completed in 2018, shows that, as a result, parts of the ozone layer have recovered at a rate of 1-3% per decade since 2000. Ozone layer protection efforts have also contributed to the fight against climate change by averting an estimated 135 billion tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions, from 1990 to 2010.”

Mr. Vunga stressed the need to maintain these gains by remaining vigilant and tackle any illegal sources of ozone-depleting substances that may arise.

The program was featured with a tree planting conducted by the National Ozone Unit for the teachers and students of the Hilliard Memorial School to conclude the event.



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