

OZONews

A weekly electronic news service on ozone protection & implementation of the Montreal Protocol compiled by:
UNEP DTIE OzonAction Programme, Paris
11 February 2002

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1- Tropical Air Thins European Ozone Layer by 30 pct (UK)

LONDON - Ozone over Europe was around a third thinner than normal during the first week of February, with regular depletion in the layer that protects people from harmful radiation becoming more frequent, scientists said last week. "This is significantly lower than what you normally see," said Neil Harris, an ozone researcher at Cambridge University ... Ozone coverage, measured in Dobson units, dropped to about 250 units at the end of January, from a normal level of 380-400, research by the German aerospace centre DLR showed. DLR found streams of low-ozone tropical air pushed up from the equatorial regions and spread over southern Spain, France and Germany, increasing harmful ultraviolet rays (UV) by 20-30 percent, the European Space Agency (ESA) said on its website. An ozone hole is coverage below 200 Dobson units, with such low densities measured over Europe on 30 November 1999 and 8 November 2001, the ESA said. "The continual decline in ozone levels due to chemical depletion and the increase in frequency of mini ozone holes over Europe is resulting in an increase in harmful biologically active UV radiation," the DLR's Thilo Erbetseder told the ESA. Scientists said the the air streams were a natural weather phenomenon and more common in winter, but that man-made climate change might be affecting such patterns. The tropical streams also brought unusually warm weather to central Europe. "These holes do exist naturally. There is evidence for increasing numbers over time," said Harris. "Is climate change causing weather patterns to change? A link is likely." Ozone can be depleted by chemicals such as chlorofluoro-carbons (CFCs), previously used in fridges, as well as crop fumigant methyl bromide, of which around 70,000 tonnes is used each year, mostly in developing countries. Many scientists say an increase in CO2 gases is affecting climate by creating global warming, leading to increased storms and droughts. Harris said predicting ozone layer recovery was a large aspect of current climate research.

Article @: <http://www.planetark.org/dailynewsstory.cfm/newsid/14453/story.htm>

Source: Planet Ark/Reuters News Service, 11 February 2002, By: Neil Chatterjee

2- Despite the Bickering Over the Kyoto Protocol, Progress Has Been Made in One Area - Reducing Ozone Depletion

... Efforts to phase out the use of CFCs, enshrined in the Montreal Protocol, have been much more successful than those aimed at cutting greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide (CO2), which are the primary cause of global warming ... The American scientist who discovered ozone depletion, Sherwood Rowland, said the ozone hole over Antarctica has stabilised and should repair itself over the next five decades. "Because the amount of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in the atmosphere is no longer increasing, there is reason for optimism that the ozone hole will not get worse than it is now," he said ... The message from the scientists meeting in Zurich was that knowledge gained about climate change has to be translated into political policy. "We're looking at a situation where, unless we actually reduce emissions of ozone-depleting gases faster, then the increasing greenhouse gas effect is going to make ozone depletion worse," said Bill Hare, director of climate policy at Greenpeace International ...

Article @: <http://www.swissinfo.org/sen/Swissinfo.html?siteSect=511&sid=1008422>

Source : SwissInfo, 02 February 2002, By Samantha Tonkin

3- Integrated Pest Management Becoming Popular Among Farmers (Bangladesh)

Integrated Pest Management (IPM), an environment-friendly system of pest control is gradually becoming popular among farmers because of its low cost but higher yields without causing damage to the environment. The Danish-funded IPM programme, "Strengthening Plant Protection Services (SPPS) Project", launched some years back to teach farmers how to manage pests and crop diseases with less inputs has proved to be extremely successful

throughout South and Southeast Asia, according to sources. A South Asian IPM specialist and Chief Technical Adviser of SPPS Dr S Ramaswamy told BSS that with a view to saving the country's already dwindling environment, it would be highly beneficial to make IPM knowledge available to the farmers of Bangladesh. He said controlling crop pests only by using poisonous chemicals would not only affect the poor, weak and illiterate farmers, but also increase cost of inputs as well as endanger quality of environment as a whole... a total of 76,000 rice farmers received IPM training and 762 rice farmers got secondary level training so far through 3,050 rice field schools. Similarly, 19,000 vegetable farmers received full IPM training and 1,90,000 vegetable farmers had secondary level training through 750 vegetable field schools so far. "The trained farmers increased yields by 10 per cent thanks to the IPM training,"... without IPM training farmers become over cautious under high inputs and high production system and tend to use more pesticides with the mistaken notion that crop can be protected only using heavy dose of pesticides...

Article @: <http://www.dailystarnews.com/200202/11/n2021110.htm#BODY4>

Source: The Daily Star Internet Edition, Bangladesh, Volume 3 Number 868, 11 February 2002

OzoNews is available on the OzonAction Programme web site @:

<http://www.uneptie.org/ozonaction/compliance/ozonews/main.html>

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