

Extract from June 2010 report on Millennium Development Goals

By 16 September 2009, 196 parties had signed the Montreal Protocol, making it the first treaty of any kind to achieve universal ratification. All the world's governments are now legally obligated to phase out ozone depleting substances (ODSs) under the schedules defined by the Protocol. This year—2010—marks the beginning of a world virtually free of the most widely used ODSs, including chlorofluorocarbons and halons.

Throughout the process, developing countries have demonstrated that, with the right kind of assistance, they are willing, ready and able to become full partners in global efforts to protect the environment. In fact, many developing countries have exceeded the reduction targets for phasing out ODSs, with the support of the Montreal Protocol Multilateral Fund.

Between 1986 and 2008, global consumption of ODSs was reduced by 98 per cent. Furthermore, from 1990 to 2010, the Montreal Protocol's control measures on production and consumption of such substances will have reduced greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent of 135 gigatons of CO₂. This is equivalent to 11 gigatons a year, four to five times the reductions targeted in the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, the agreement linked to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Parties to the Montreal Protocol are now examining ways to use the treaty's vigorous implementation regime to promote even greater climate change benefits.

Without the action prompted by the Montreal Protocol and its Vienna Convention, atmospheric levels of ozone-depleting substances would grow 10-fold by 2050. The resulting exposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation would likely have led to up to 20 million additional cases of skin cancer and 130 million more cases of eye cataracts; it would also have caused damage to human immune systems, wildlife and agriculture. For much of the world, the time it takes to get sunburned would have been dramatically reduced, due to a 500-per cent increase in DNA-damaging ultraviolet radiation.” (page 54)