



United Nations Environment Programme

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة • 联合国环境规划署
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

PRESS RELEASE

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 www.uneptie.org/ozonaction/events/ozoneday/2005_main.htm

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