



### **UNEP DTIE OzonAction Programme under the Multilateral Fund**



#### **Training of Customs Officers in Bahrain to help monitor regional trade in Ozone Depleting Substances**

Manama/Nairobi, January 2001 - To help protect the environment through the monitoring of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS), Bahrain recently hosted a training session for its custom officers. The third of its kind in the world and the first for the region of West Asia, the session focused on assisting customs officers and other relevant stakeholders to enable Bahrain's compliance with the provisions of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. The West Asian region has become a global focus due to its vast oil resources and their impact on environment. In hosting this event, Bahrain has taken a regional lead in planning for sustainable development.

Held from 20–22 January in Manama, the “Train the Trainers” session was organized by the OzonAction Programme of the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP DTIE) in co-operation with the World Customs Organization.

“Intensive training of Custom Officers needs to be undertaken to combat the emerging problem of illegal ODS trade that is threatening the success of the Montreal Protocol” says Dr. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of UNEP.

During the opening address, Bahrain's Director General of Environmental Affairs, Mr. Khalid Mohammed Fakhro, stressed “the importance of close cooperation between the countries in the region in areas such as prevention of illegal ODS trade and sharing experiences on project implementation activities”. He also acknowledged the importance of achieving synergies with other environmental conventions for monitoring the movement of non-environmental products.

This important event was attended by twenty-two customs officers, parcel clearance officers, port inspection officers, business representatives and members from the Ministry of Commerce, Bahrain Defence Force and the Ministry of Defence Services. The training provided participants with the necessary skills to monitor and control the imports and exports of ODS and the products containing them. Participants were made aware of Ozone layer depletion and its harmful consequences and the national efforts of Bahrain under the Montreal Protocol, including the national import/export licensing system. The participants were also informed of the regional context of illegal trade, methods for identifying ODS and ODS containing equipment and were given practical hands-on experience on ODS identification. Additional aims for the training included creating available trained customs trainers and key stakeholders for the subsequent training of remaining customs officers.

The Montreal Protocol is an international environmental agreement that obligates the Party countries to phase out within a stipulated time-schedule, their use of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) that are harmful to human and animal life.

#### **For further information on this workshop please contact:**

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#### **About the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics**

The mission of the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics is to help decision-makers in government, local authorities and industry develop and adopt policies and practices that:

- are cleaner and safer;

- make efficient use of natural resources;
- ensure adequate management of chemicals;
- incorporate environmental costs;
- reduce pollution and risks for humans and the environment.

The UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP DTIE), with its head office in Paris, is composed of one centre and four units:

- The International Environmental Technology Centre (Osaka), which promotes the adoption and use of environmentally sound technologies with a focus on the environmental management of cities and freshwater basins, in developing countries and countries in transition.
- Production and Consumption (Paris), which fosters the development of cleaner and safer production and consumption patterns that lead to increased efficiency in the use of natural resources and reductions in pollution.
- Chemicals (Geneva), which promotes sustainable development by catalyzing global actions and building national capacities for the sound management of chemicals and the improvement of chemical safety worldwide, with a priority on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and Prior Informed Consent (PIC, jointly with FAO).
- Energy and OzonAction (Paris), which supports the phase-out of ozone depleting substances in developing countries and countries with economies in transition and promotes good management practices and use of energy, with a focus on atmospheric impacts. The UNEP/RISØ Collaborating Centre on Energy and Environment supports the work of the Unit.
- Economics and Trade (Geneva), which promotes the use and application of assessment and incentive tools for environmental policy and helps improve the understanding of linkages between trade and environment and the role of financial institutions in promoting sustainable development.

UNEP DTIE activities focus on raising awareness, improving the transfer of information, building capacity, fostering technology Co-operation, partnerships and transfer, improving understanding of environmental impacts of trade issues, promoting integration of environmental considerations into economic policies and catalyzing global chemical safety.

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