



## Press Releases/Information Notes



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### **\$600 million needed for protecting ozone layer over next three years, say experts, taking Ozone Fund to \$2 billion mark**

MONTREAL/NAIROBI, 23 July 2002 - Representatives from some 100 countries are meeting in Montreal from 23 to 25 July to review an expert report on how much money will be needed for a three-year replenishment of the Multilateral Fund for the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.

Under the Montreal Protocol, developing countries are committed to reducing their consumption and production of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by 50% in the year 2005, and by 85% in 2007. By 2005 they are also obliged to reduce their consumption of halons by 50%, methyl bromide (a fumigant) by 20%, and the solvents carbon tetrachloride and methylchloroform by 85% and 30%, respectively.

The role of the Fund - which is headquartered in Montreal and has already disbursed some \$1.3 billion since it was set up in 1990 - is to help developing countries meet these targets by adopting ozone-friendly chemicals and processes.

Commenting on the task ahead, Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, under whose auspices the Protocol was negotiated said: "While the industrialized countries have virtually eliminated their dependence on CFCs - the major culprit in ozone depletion - the developing countries are now entering the crucial stage in their phase-out campaigns and must start drastically reducing their dependence on CFCs."

Against this background, the Parties to the Protocol set up a task force consisting of members of UNEP's Technology and Economic Assessment Panel to assess the resources that developing countries will now need meeting their next targets. The task force estimates that a sum of US\$548 - 600 million will be required for the three-year replenishment period of 2003-2005. A decision on the 2006-2008 replenishment will be taken in 2005.

This week's meeting of the Protocol's Open Ended Working Group will review the task force estimates and forward a recommendation for a final decision by the 14th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, which will take place in Rome from 25-29 November 2002.

Of the \$1.4 billion that the Multilateral Fund has received in contributions from industrialized countries, some \$1.3 billion has been disbursed to phase-out the consumption of 161,610 tonnes, and the production of 52,570 tonnes, of ozone-depleting substances in 134 developing countries. Disbursements are made through four implementing agencies: the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the World Bank.

"Data collected last year by the Protocol's Secretariat indicate that most developing countries are currently in compliance with their commitments," said Mr. Töpfer. "To maintain this momentum, the donor countries must continue supporting developing countries in their transition to ozone-friendly technologies. Given the huge risks that a weakened ozone layer poses to human health and to environment, the partnership between developed and developing countries must remain strong and effective."

CFCs have been widely used since the 1930s in refrigerators, air conditioners, foams and other applications; they remain in the atmosphere for decades or even centuries. Halons are primarily used in fire extinguishers. Together with other chemicals, they destroy ozone molecules in the stratosphere that protect all living things from ultra-violet radiation. Exposure to UV-C and to too much UV-B can cause more melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers, more eye cataracts,

weakened immune systems, reduced plant yields, damage to ocean eco-systems and reduced fishing yields, adverse effects on animals, and more damage to plastics.

The Montreal Protocol has been ratified by 186 countries.

**Note to journalists:**

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