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Press Releases/Information Notes



ILLEGAL TRADE IN OZONE DEPLETING SUBSTANCES - UNEP TAKES AN IN-DEPTH LOOK

Paris/Nairobi, October 2001 - UNEP's Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP DTIE) has released *Illegal Trade in Ozone Depleting Substances: is there a hole in the Montreal Protocol?* This new publication takes the form of a special supplement to the [OzonAction Newsletter](#) and aims to raise awareness about the problem of illegal trade in these environmentally-damaging chemicals, as well as stimulate action to combat trafficking.

Government, academic and NGO experts from developed and developing nations explore the complexities of illegal ODS trade and offer recommendations for putting an end to this problem.

"The term 'illegal trade' usually evokes images of drugs, not metal cylinders filled with industrial chemicals," says Klaus Toepfer, UNEP's Executive Director. "When any substance is banned, it immediately creates a potential black market - and ODS are no exception to this rule."

"Education is key to curtailing illegal trade," Mr. Toepfer continues, "Ignorance is an ODS smuggler's best friend - the complexities surrounding the movement of illegal imports, as well as the scientific nature of ODS chemicals make it that much easier to deceive a customs officer who is not well informed."

Training programmes for customs officers are needed not just for the Montreal Protocol, but also for other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) such as the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). Such programmes need to be harmonized so that customs officers receive comprehensive training that covers all MEAs. Through unified international efforts, illegal ODS trade can be reduced, if not completely eliminated.

The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was created to address ozone layer depletion. Yet, illegal imports of ODS threaten the future of international environmental and trade agreements and could potentially undo the years of hard work - and funding - invested in ozone protection by the international community.

This document is part of the information exchange services provided by UNEP to developing countries to support their compliance with the provisions of the Montreal Protocol. The Special Supplement is available in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#) on the OzonAction web site at www.unepdtie.org/ozonaction/library/oan/main.html or in hardcopy free of charge from UNEP's distribution agent, SMI (Anthony@smibooks.com). The OzonAction Programme also provides other clearinghouse services (Training & Networking of ODS Officers) as well as assistance with the development of national ODS phase out strategies (Country Programmes) and Institutional Strengthening support.

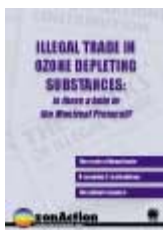
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UNEP Information Note 01/33

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Note to Journalists:

Under the landmark international agreement, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, 180 countries have committed to a precise schedule for reducing and eventually phasing out their consumption and production of ozone depleting substances (ODS).

Over the past 10 years, the Protocol's Multilateral Fund has provided over US\$ 1 billion in financial and technical assistance to support such phase out activities in more than 100 Article 5 (developing) countries. This investment by the international community will result in the elimination of approximately 140,000 ODP tonnes of ODS consumption and will contribute significantly to the recover of the ozone layer.

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[Back to the Press Releases page](#)



Top