

3. Pacific Island Nations Consider Protection Measures

Fiji has become the first Pacific Island country to initiate serious measures to protect the ozone layer, according to the UN Environment Program (UNEP).

At a training session held last week in Fiji for refrigeration technicians who service equipment containing ozone-depleting substances, the government launched an island-wide training program to reduce the emissions of the life-threatening substances.

Fiji has also committed itself to phasing out such chemicals in advance of the 2010 deadline established by the Montreal Protocol. Fiji may meet that deadline by 2002, UNEP said.

The training session is scheduled to be followed by a regional compliance action workshop on the Montreal Protocol to be held in Western Samoa in April. Fourteen Pacific Island countries are expected to participate

Source: UNEP release, 15 March 2001, @: <http://www.unfoundation.org/unwire/unwire.cfm#12>

4. Sanya Strives to Become China's First Freon-Free City

Hotels, government organizations, as well as bus drivers in Sanya, a well-known tourist destination on the southern tip of this Chinese tropical island of Hainan

<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/data/province/hainan.html>, have been busy replacing freon in refrigeration and using a new freezing agent.

That is just part of a city-wide campaign launched to eliminate freon traditionally used as a freezing agent for refrigeration in air conditioners and other freezing equipment since the beginning of the year.

The campaign will go through 2002, said a local official.

Sanya, which falls under the jurisdiction of Hainan Province, is one of the country's best cities for tourism development and a role model for horticulture and ecological balance. It is also considered one of the cities that has the best air quality in the world.

"Eliminating freon is an important step to maintain a fine ecological environment and steady growth in Sanya's tourism industry," said the official.

Among punitive measures for violations, many shops engaged in freon business in the city are shut down, and freezing equipment and freezing agents that go against the freon-free standard will be confiscated, the official warned.

The local administrative departments will not approve annual check-up documents of drivers who continue to drive vehicles with freon as the freezing agent.

Developers for new or extension projects that will require the use of freon as a cooling agent can get neither construction approval nor credit support from commercial banks, said the official.

Source: English People Daily @: http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200102/25/eng20010225_63315.html

5. Twelve Arrested in Alleged Illegal Freon Ring Wednesday

LOUISVILLE - Police in Jefferson County, Kentucky, United States, think they have broken up a ring that stole the ozone-depleting refrigerant Freon and then illegally sold it to businesses.

Twelve men were arrested on Tuesday and 10 tons of the coolant has been seized. The Freon was estimated to be worth \$1 million on the black market, authorities said.

Source: The Associated Press, Cincinnati Enquirer, 14 March 2001, @: http://enquirer.com/editions/2001/03/14/loc_arrested_in_alleged.html

6. UN Web Site Encourages Recycling of Greenhouse Gas

The United Nations launched a Web site on Friday aimed at making it easier for businesses to recycle halon, a gas hard to replace as a fire retardant that also contributes to global warming.

The on-line Halon Trader, a virtual marketplace found @: <http://www.halontrader.org> is intended to promote the resale of halon already in use and thereby reduce demand for newly produced halon.

The gas is being phased out worldwide because it attacks the Earth's protective ozone layer when released into the atmosphere, warming the Earth and increasing the risk of skin cancers.

But it is still permitted for essential uses under the Montreal Protocol, a global 1989 environmental accord.

While industrial nations no longer make halon, the protocol gave poorer nations until 2010 to end their production.

