

A weekly electronic news service on ozone protection & related issues compiled by: UNEP DTIE OzonAction Programme, Paris

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1. Seasonal Ozone Update, Arctic Ozone Values Similar to 1980's

Geneva, 24 April 2001 - Northern middle and high latitude ozone values during winter and spring appeared to be higher than in recent years, according to measurements released by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), issued today in Geneva. This weaker than usual ozone depletion reflects natural variations that affect the seasonal losses.

Total ozone values measured by the WMO's Global Atmosphere Watch network of ground based stations and satellites were about five per cent less than the average pre-1980 levels which are used as a 'normal' un-depleted reference. These higher ozone values are attributed to natural variations. The reduced loss is not related to the expected long-term recovery of the stratospheric ozone layer in the coming decades...

Full Text @: http://www.wmo.ch/web/Press/Press660.html
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Source: World Meteorological Organization

2. Air Pollution Blamed for More Deaths

ATHENS, 27 April 2001 - Greek scientists on Friday expressed their concern over air pollution and the "ozone hole," saying that they are responsible for an increased number of deaths in Europe, including Greece, and the United States.

Addressing a meeting to assess the environmental impact on health in Athens, Greek scientists said that air pollution is responsible for 0.6 percent of the total mortality rate of the population.

Air pollution is also responsible for 0.8 percent of the mortality rate for those who suffer respiratory problems and 0.4 percent for people who suffer heart problems, they said.

Warning that the "ozone hole" causes an increase in skin cancers, they said that there will be further increase in skin cancers due to the increased ultraviolet light reaching the lower parts of the atmosphere.

Source: XINHUA News Agency.

Article @: http://library.northernlight.com/FC20010427590000105.html?cb=0&dx=1006&sc=0#doc

3. The Democratic Party of Japan Bill Proposes Fluorocarbon tax

The Democratic Party of Japan unveiled a bill Wednesday to levy a tax on manufacturers in order to promote the collection and disposal of three types of greenhouse gases known to destroy the ozone layer.

The bill proposes a fluorocarbon tax, the revenue of which would be used to run a center to collect & destroy chlorofluorocarbons, hydrofluorocarbons and hydrochlorofluorocarbons, used as refrigerants in automobiles, industrial cooling equipment and home appliances. Tax revenue would also be used to develop technologies to replace the gases; as well as to collect gases contained in used appliances exported to developing countries. The draft differs from that under consideration by the ruling coalition in that it would:

* Call for a tax, rather than a manufacturer-supported fund.

- * Include destruction of chlorofluorocarbon insulation in home appliances, in addition to automobiles and industrial coolers.
- * Obligate collection of the gases during repair and moving of chlorofluorocarbon-containing machines. Party officials said the manufacturer-supplied fund currently proposed by the ruling parties will not necessarily guarantee that makers foot the bill for retrieval and destruction of the gases. They hope to iron out differences with the coalition and jointly submit a bill during the current Diet session, they added.

Source: The Japan Times: 19 April 2001 @: http://www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/getarticle.pl5?nn20010419b8.htm

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