

OZONews

A weekly electronic news service on ozone protection & implementation of the Montreal Protocol compiled by:
UNEP DTIE OzonAction Programme, Paris
21 January 2002

Table of Contents:

- 1- **China Hosts Environment Ministers from Asia, Europe**
 - 2- **Experts Discuss Ways to Beat Ozone Depletion (UAE)**
 - 3- **Bad Day, Sunshine, Radiation Levels are Up and Our Satellite is Down**
 - 4- **Easing off the (Greenhouse) Gas**
 - 5- **Federal Report Backs Emissions Trading (Canada)**
 - 6- **New Website on Fluorocarbons (Belgium)**
-

1- China Hosts Environment Ministers from Asia, Europe

Beijing, China - A key meeting of 25 environment ministers, the first of its kind within the group known as Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), took place in Beijing today. Asia-Europe Meeting is an informal process of dialogue and cooperation bringing together the 15 countries of the European Union, and 10 Asian nations: Brunei, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam... China is taking environmental protection ever more seriously. A new official Chinese government report says the Yangtze River is becoming increasingly polluted with sewage and industrial waste. The report by the Yangtze River Water Resources Authority concludes that stretches of the river are too polluted for human use, and will continue to deteriorate. Wang Zhijia, director of international cooperation for China's State Environmental Protection Administration said Wednesday that China has signed more than 20 international conventions that deal with environmental issues such as biological diversity, climate change, the protection of the ozone layer, and the control of transboundary movements of hazardous wastes... The fourth ASEM meeting will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark later this year.

Full text @: <http://ens-news.com/ens/jan2002/2002L-01-17-01.html>

Source: Environment News Service (ENS), 17 January 2002

2- Experts Discuss Ways to Beat Ozone Depletion (UAE)

A regional symposium on Alternatives to Ozone Depleting Substances in the AGCC region, jointly organised by the United Nations Environment Programme and the Federal Environment Agency, is being held from January 15 to 17, at the Renaissance Hotel in Dubai. It is being attended by representatives of environmental and government bodies, UNEP delegates as well as trade representatives dealing in products promoting the use of hydrocarbons. The gathering was addressed on the first day of the symposium by Dr Saad Al Numairy, Head of the Federal Environment Agency and Dr Jamal Hussein of the AGCC Secretariat. Michael Graber, Ozone Secretariat, UNEP, spoke about the obligations of the Montreal Protocol, the ratifications of the amendments, as well as illegal trade in Ozone Depleting Substances and the reporting of data by the developing countries, besides other implementational issues. Dr Abdul Elah Al Wedaee, UNEP-ROWA, gave an overview of the compliance status of AGCC countries on the OSD control measures recommended by the Montreal Protocol, and gave a summary of progress in the AGCC countries about the status of legislation and implementation of national phase-out programmes. Engineer Jamal A. Al Fuzai, UNEP, spoke about the mechanisms for selecting alternatives to fire-fighting retardants and their advantages and disadvantages from the governmental perspective while Fareed Bushehri, UNEP, spoke about the private sector's views on the matter. Working groups were also formed on the first day to review experiences with alternative substances in AGCC countries, including their availability, performance and cost.

Article @: <http://www.khaleejtimes.co.ae/wednesday/uae.htm#story5>

Source: Khaleej Times Online, 16 January 2002

3- Bad Day, Sunshine, Radiation Levels are Up and Our Satellite is Down

Last September, NASA launched the QuikTOMS satellite to keep a close eye on Earth's ozone layer. But a rocket malfunction 83 seconds into the flight sent the spacecraft into a useless orbit and threw scientists into a small panic. They now have to rely on increasingly shaky data from QuikTOMS's aging predecessor, the 6-year-old TOMS (Total Ozone Mapping Spectrometer) satellite, to monitor the battered ozone shield that protects us from harmful ultraviolet rays... Most radiation longer than ultraviolet-visible, infrared, radio-is too weak to meddle with the atomic bonds in molecules. But ultraviolet is potent enough to trigger the chemical transformations that lead to mutations and gene

defects. About 1 percent of all the rays hitting a sunbather is ultraviolet light-about a million trillion photons per second, most of them carrying enough energy to change the DNA of a cell... Epidemiologists have found that every 1 percent increase in lifetime exposure to ultraviolet light produces a 1 percent hike in the risk of melanoma. And it's hard to escape the UV. Hiding under a beach umbrella is an imperfect solution: One-third of the ultraviolet scatters in the atmosphere and comes at you sideways. Snow reflects about 80 percent of incoming ultraviolet light, burning skiers who forget to wear protection. Grass reflects just 3 percent, but summer picnics take place under the harsh summer sun. Better to be outside on a winter day (hold the snow) when the sun is low in the sky, cutting UV-A levels in half and chopping UV-B rays by 80 percent. Or watch the world behind a closed window: Glass stops UV-B cold... Although the worst ozone-depleting chemicals have been banned, scientists predict the ozone layer will take about 50 years to heal; meanwhile, UV levels continue to rise. NASA is scrambling to assemble a replacement satellite to track the changes. **Full text @:** http://www.discover.com/feb_02/featsky.html
Source: DISCOVER Vol. 23 No. 2 (February 2002), By Bob Berman

4- Easing off the (Greenhouse) Gas

A new NASA-funded study shows that the rate of growth of greenhouse gas emissions has slowed since its peak in 1980, due in part to international cooperation that led to reduced chlorofluorocarbon use, slower growth of methane, and a steady rate of carbon dioxide emissions. Researchers have shown that global warming in recent decades has probably been caused by carbon dioxide (CO₂), and other greenhouse gases including chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), methane, tropospheric ozone, and black carbon (soot) particles. Overall, the growth of emissions has slowed over the past 20 years, with the CFC phase-out being the most important factor, according to the study. "The decrease is due in large part to cooperative international actions of the Montreal Protocol for the phase-out of ozone-depleting gases," explains James Hansen an author of the report from NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies. "But it is also due in part to slower growth of methane and carbon dioxide, for reasons that aren't well understood and need more study."...

Full text/graphics/photos @: http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2002/15jan_greenhouse.htm?list116540

Source: Nasa Science News, 15 January 2002

5- Federal Report Backs Emissions Trading (Canada)

Canada could save \$20 billion over the next decade if it adopts an innovative program that uses financial incentives to encourage companies to cut greenhouse gas emissions, according to a federal report. The study, done for the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, looked at an emissions-trading system as a means of getting some of the country's biggest polluters to reduce greenhouse gas levels. The round table, an independent federal agency, is taking the report across the country to raise awareness of the system before Canada decides whether it will sign the Kyoto Protocol... Industry has for the most part approved of the system because it allows some companies to profit from their attempts to reduce the emissions, which have been linked to climate change, especially along the East Coast and in the mid-United States. It was also used in the United States to phase out CFCs, gaseous compounds harmful to the ozone layer... Environmentalists have also praised the method, which has been used to a small extent in Canada for ozone-depleting substances such as methyl bromide...

Full text @:

http://www.thestar.com/NASApp/cs/ContentServer?pagename=thestar/Layout/Article_PrintFriendly&c=Article&cid=1011049456074

Source: TheStarCom, 14 January 2002

6- New Website on Fluorocarbons (Belgium)

Fluorocarbons are important to provide safe and efficient refrigerants, insulating gases, medical aerosols, etc. HFCs are the only ozone-benign refrigerants which are non-flammable, energy efficient and recyclable. Discover their main applications as well as technology, safety, economic and regulatory aspects on the new Website on fluorocarbons and Sulphur hexafluoride. @: www.fluorocarbons.org provided by the European Fluorocarbon Technical Committee (EFCTC), which group the European fluorocarbon producers within the European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC). **Contact:** Mr. Bent Jensen, Tel: (32 2) 676 72 40 Fax: (32 2) 676 73 01 Email: bj@cefic.be

OzoNews is available on the OzonAction Programme web site @:

<http://www.uneptie.org/ozonaction/compliance/ozonews/main.html>

United Nations Environment Programme Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics (UNEP DTIE) OzonAction Programme provides OzoNews as a free service to help keep readers informed about current news relating to ozone depletion and the implementation of the Montreal Protocol. The goal of OzoNews is to provide information, stimulate discussion and promote cooperation in support of compliance with the Montreal Protocol. With the exception of items written by UNEP and occasional contributions solicited from other organizations, the news is sourced from on-line newspapers, journals and websites. The views expressed in articles written by external authors are solely the viewpoints of those authors and do not represent the policy or viewpoint of UNEP. While UNEP strives to avoid inclusion of misleading or inaccurate information, it is ultimately the responsibility of the reader to evaluate the accuracy of any news article in OzoNews. The citing of commercial technologies, products or services does not constitute endorsement of those items by UNEP.

If you have questions, comments, ideas for future articles, or you want to discontinue receiving this update, please contact: Mrs. Samira de Gobert, Tel. (+33) 1 44371452 Email: samira.degobert@unep.fr

Prepared by: Samira de Gobert, *Research Assistant*
Reviewer: Jim Curlin, *Information Officer*