



Senator the Hon Don Farrell

MEDIA RELEASE

Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water

DF12/047

13 September 2012

GLOBAL COMMUNITY CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF OZONE LAYER PROTECTION

The Gillard Government has today recognised Australian leadership in protecting the world from depletion of the ozone layer.

Senator Don Farrell, Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water, paid tribute to members of the Australian science community, industry and the public sector as part of international celebrations for the 25th anniversary of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone layer.

“The Montreal Protocol is a great example of what the international community can do when it works together with science and industry on a common issue,” Senator Farrell said.

“The discovery of the Antarctic ozone hole in the 1980s identified a serious risk to human health and the natural environment from harmful ultraviolet radiation. Recent studies suggest that had ozone destruction continued unchecked, the incidence of skin cancer would have increased by 16 per cent worldwide by 2030, affecting in excess of 2 million more people each year.

“Thankfully, the international community responded to this challenge with the start of coordinated action through the Montreal Protocol on 16 September 1987. The Hawke Labor Government then introduced the 1989 Ozone Protection Act, which initiated Australia’s action.

“Twenty-five years later the Montreal Protocol has turned out to be the world’s most successful multilateral environmental agreement – ratified by all 197 United Nations member nations. Early indications are that the ozone layer over most of the globe will recover by around the middle of this century, and by 2060 over Antarctica.

“Australians have been at the forefront of these efforts and today is a great opportunity to thank those dedicated individuals from government, industry, and scientific and technical organisations who have worked together towards this globally important common goal.

“Our universities and scientific institutions, including the CSIRO, Bureau of Meteorology and the Australian Antarctic Division, continue to play key roles in the evolution of ozone science, especially in relation to the southern hemisphere. We are represented on major scientific and technical bodies that support the Montreal Protocol. It is a credit to them that such great success has been achieved, both in Australia and around the world, in the face of one of our planet’s greatest environmental challenges.”

Senator Farrell accepted a plaque from the United Nations Environment Programme in recognition of the Australian Government’s vital role in protecting the ozone layer for generations to come.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard, in a message delivered on her behalf by Parliamentary Secretary for Climate Change Mark Dreyfus, said the global effort to save our ozone layer from destruction is one of the international community’s greatest environmental success stories.

“The Montreal Protocol united governments, scientists, industry and communities in a common purpose - ensuring that the ozone layer can continue to protect life on earth from the sun’s harmful ultraviolet radiation,” the Prime Minister said in her message.

Senator Farrell presented certificates of recognition to seven Australians for their contributions to the Montreal Protocol, the global phase-out of ozone depleting substances, and to Australia’s successful phase-out of ozone depleting substances.

For more information on Australia’s participation in the Montreal Protocol see:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/atmosphere/ozone/legislation/montp.html>

Certificate Recipients

Mr Steve Anderson

For leadership of Australian industry in phasing-out the consumption of ozone depleting substances in advance of Montreal Protocol obligations, and for his initiative in establishing an Australian product stewardship scheme for refrigerants to reduce emissions.

Dr Jonathan Banks

For leadership and work with countries, on the international phase-out of methyl bromide consumption through the Montreal Protocol's Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee, and for his work at CSIRO on development of methyl bromide alternatives.

Mr Michael Bennett

For leadership and management of an Australian product stewardship scheme for refrigerants that has successfully destroyed thousands of tonnes of waste refrigerant, and for his support of research on emissions of ozone depleting substances in Australia.

Dr Paul Fraser

For leading Australian atmospheric measurement of ozone-depleting substances for more than 30 years, contributing to global ozone assessments, and for his strong support for industry and government action to phase-out use of ozone depleting substances in Australia.

Dr Ian Porter

For leadership internationally on the transition from controlled uses of methyl bromide, and his contribution to the phase-out of methyl bromide uses in Australia including research and promotion of alternatives.

Dr Helen Tope

For international leadership in helping countries to transition from using ozone-depleting substances to alternatives for medical purposes, and for her domestic leadership on ozone protection policies with the Victorian Environment Protection Authority.

Mr John Whitelaw

For leadership in development and early implementation of the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and for his support of initial Australian government action on ozone protection.