



INFORMATION NOTE

2012 International Ozone Day: Chinese Youth Relay on Ozone Protection



16 September 2012, Beijing/Nairobi – The Ministry of Environmental Protection of China initiated “China Youth to Repair the Sky” on 2012 International Ozone Layer Protection Day to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Mr. Marco Gonzalez, Executive Secretary of the UNEP Ozone Secretariat and Zhang Lijun, Vice Minister of China Ministry of Environmental Protection attended the activities.

“Protecting our atmosphere for generations to come” is the theme of this year’s International Ozone Day commemoration and initiated a series of advocacy campaigns. The *Global Youth Protection of the Ozone Layer Video Contest* was among the most important promotional activities. The winning entries will be played in the 24th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol in November of this year, Geneva, Switzerland, and the first prize winner of the video will be invited to participate in the conference.

In support of this global video competition, the Foreign Economic Cooperation Office (MEP/FECO) and Education Center of Ministry of Environmental Protection of China, as the organizer of the activities of UNEP in China, has started collecting video clips among young people born after 16 September 1987 across the country since August this year. This has brought great attention and participation from numbers of young people in relevant age group.

The organizer has collected more than 100 pieces from 16 provinces and regions up until September 12, the end of the initial evaluation. Entries included cartoons, video skits, and even journalistic reports among all the works. The oldest contestant is 24 years old while the youngest is only 6 years old.

Among the entries received in China, MEP/FECO selected national winners, ie. the first prize winners were Xu Binbin and Zeng Tianran from Hangzhou Normal University, who called on all countries to take positive actions together by joining hands and coping global environmental issues jointly.

The UNEP Patron for Art and Environment, Prof. Yuan Xikun advised Chinese young people and donated one of his most representative sculptures Sky Goddess to youth representatives.

Chinese well-known young singer Tan Jing also donated her new environmental song Sky Goddess. The song has been sung by Beijing's 161 Middle School students, and broadcast by on-site video to national youth for proposal of Repair the Sky and Protect Our Home.

The Montreal Protocol has been promoted by relevant UN agencies and Governments for 25 years since it was signed on September 16, 1987 by the representatives of 24 national Governments in Montreal, Canada. After 25 years of unremitting efforts of generations, the Montreal Protocol has been participated by 197 countries and regions around the world and has become the only multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) universally ratified by all countries.

The Montreal Protocol has successfully reduced more than 95% of the ozone depleting substances and prevented hundreds of millions of cases of cancer and cataract patients so far. During which process China provided the impetus for the sustainable development and technological innovation of related industries, through the introduction of more advanced environmental protection technology. Additionally, environmental awareness and sense of social responsibility have been improved greatly within the Chinese society.

According to the observations of scientists, the ozone layer is expected to return to the levels of the 1980s in the mid-century if countries can continue to abide by the obligations of the Montreal Protocol. Since its accession to the Protocol, China has gradually established the laws and regulations of eliminating ozone depleting substances (ODS). China has also carried out activities to encourage the application of substitutes and alternative technologies and has eliminated more than 100,000 tons of ODS, which accounts for half of the total phase-out obligation in developing countries. With the successful completion of the four major ODS phase-out programmes, China has made outstanding contributions to the cause of global protection of the ozone layer.

In accordance with the requirements of the Protocol, China needs to freeze its HCFC production and consumption by 2013 to that of 2009-2010 average, to reduce 10% of baseline consumption by 2015, and to achieve total phase-out by 2030, while retaining a small amount for servicing purposes. To achieve this objective, China needs to eliminate 45,000 tonnes of HCFCs by 2015 in consumer goods industries only, and 30 million tonnes in 2030, while the elimination in production industry accounts much more. The compliance of protecting the ozone layer is confronted with unprecedented pressure.

“There is still a long way to go for the compliance and young people will become the future leaders and practitioners, to shoulder the responsibility of taking over the baton and making greater achievements,” said Zhang Lijun, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection, as a special message to youth.

He also hoped that throughout their lives, young people will buy products that are environmentally friendly and free from ODS. “Young people should become the ambassadors to promote knowledge and awareness of environmental protection and raise the attention to environmental protection of the whole society,” he added.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection issued certificates for the winners and their instructors who participate in the China Youth Protection of the Ozone Layer 2012 video clip contest.

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Notes to Editors

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the United Nations system's designated entity for addressing environmental issues at the global and regional level. Its mandate is to coordinate the development of environmental policy consensus by keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of governments and the international community for action.

Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer is an international treaty designed to protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production and consumption of a number of substances believed to be responsible for ozone depletion. The treaty was opened for signature on September 16, 1987 and entered into force on January 1, 1989. Since then, it has undergone five revisions, in 1990 (London), 1992 (Copenhagen), 1995 (Vienna), 1997 (Montreal), and 1999 (Beijing). Due to its widespread adoption and implementation it has been hailed as an example of exceptional international cooperation "Perhaps the single most successful international agreement to date..."

The Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol is managed by an Executive Committee which is responsible for overseeing the operation of the Fund. The Committee comprises seven members from developed and seven members from developing countries. The 2012 Committee membership includes Belgium, Canada, Finland, Japan, Romania, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America (developed countries) and Argentina, China, Cuba, India, Kenya, Jordan and Mali (developing country members) and is chaired by Mr. Xiao Xuezhi (China). The Committee is assisted by the Fund Secretariat which is based in Montreal, Canada.