

NATIONAL NEWS



Roadshow marks World Ozone Day



Educating the public on the importance of the ozone layer and the dangers it can cause to planet earth if it is not protected from man-made hazards was the aim of a roadshow organised on Saturday.

The Ozone unit in the Climate Change division within the Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment in collaboration with the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) hosted this activity to commemorate World Ozone Day which fell on Friday September 16, 2022.

The road show, which took place under the theme 'Common goal towards the protection of natural environment through sustainable practices', was held on the premises of Camion Hall in Victoria.

Apart from live entertainment by SBC, the show saw various stalls promoting and sensitising on the protection of the ozone layer.

Participants included the Seychelles National Parks and Garden Authority, the Seychelles Meteorological Authority, TRASS, the Public Utilities Corporation (PUC), GEF UNDP, Seychelles Breweries Ltd, Richie's Spare Parts, PillayR Group and the Seychelles Islands Foundation (SIF).

The road show was opened by the Minister for Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment, Flavien Joubert, in the presence of invited guests and dignitaries who included the Minister for Education, Dr Justin Valentin, principal secretaries and chief executives.

With the next road show to be held on Praslin this coming Saturday September 24, 2022, Minister Joubert said these activities are very important to reach out to our population across the islands, partner with our communities and to showcase our country's ongoing efforts to be in compliance with the Montreal Protocol and the Kigali Amendment and to exhibit the achievements attained thus far.

"So I am very happy to join you to launch the common goal towards the protection of our natural environment through this sustainable practices road show and to thank all of you for your presence today and for your insatiable effort to keep our environment safe and sound on a daily basis," said Minister Joubert.

Minister Joubert added that we build back from Covid-19, we must ensure a more resilient society, through effective policies and investments that combat climate change and equally protect our environment while we also reinforce those efforts to safeguard our planet, so it can continue to sustain generations to come by protecting life on earth through global cooperation.

Although it was raining on and off, a large crowd came to visit and interact with representatives in the various stalls to boost their knowledge of the ozone layer and why it is important to protect it.

The show also highlighted natural refrigerants that can be used in cooling systems and help reduce global warming gases, promote energy efficient equipment and sustainable practices which are environmentally-friendly and ozone-friendly and achieve better social, economic and environmental benefits that will help the fight against global warming that cause climate change.

It provided the opportunity for the public to have hands on feel on the technology options and their techno-economic viabilities to support the new climate variability and adaptation, through various household equipment that were on display.

During the opening ceremony, refrigerant technicians from various companies and who had undergone training on 'Handling & Safety Aspect of Hydrocarbon' at the Seychelles Institute of Technology (SIT), were presented with their certificates.

It has been 35 years since the Montreal Protocol on

Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was ratified on September 16, 1987 with the theme 'Montreal Protocol@35: global cooperation protecting life on earth', to end one of the biggest threats ever to face humanity: the depletion of the Ozone Layer that protects life on earth against excess ultra violet (UV) radiation. It set out the principles for cooperation and information sharing on the effects of human activities on the ozone layer. Our country ratified the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on the Phase-down of Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) which are potent Green House gases, (GHG), in August 2019.

Ozone layer depletion causes increased UV radiation levels at the Earth's surface, which is damaging to human health. Negative effects include increases in certain types of skin cancers, eye cataracts and immune deficiency disorders.

Inese Chang-Waye, senior ozone officer in the environment department, has called on the public to refrain from disposing, in the environment, of cooling equipment such as air-conditions, fridges, water dispensers among others containing refrigerant gases that harm the ozone.

She said that people should call the environment division before they dispose of those equipment so that arrangements can be made to remove the gas from them before they are disposed of.

She added that if the gas is not removed it will escape into the atmosphere which will further contribute to the depletion of the ozone layer and global warming.

The accompanying photos show highlights of the roadshow.

Patrick Joubert Photos contributed

