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**United Nations
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**Thirty-Third Meeting of the Parties to the
Montreal Protocol on Substances
that Deplete the Ozone Layer**
Online, 23–29 October 2021

Issues that the Secretariat would like to bring to the attention of the parties

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. The present note summarizes issues of relevance to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and activities that have taken place, or will take place, during the period from July to October 2021 that the Secretariat wishes to bring to the attention of the parties.

II. Activities of the Ozone Secretariat

A. World Ozone Day 2021

2. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/114, the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer (World Ozone Day) is observed each year on 16 September to commemorate the signing of the Montreal Protocol on 16 September 1987. As a result of restrictions on travel and gatherings owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic having eased somewhat during 2021, more in-person commemorative activities for World Ozone Day 2021 were held and shared by the Secretariat on the World Ozone Day 2021 webpage. However, given the increased use of online platforms, digital assets and communications channels for awareness-raising activities, the Secretariat has continued to develop additional digital and social media assets to facilitate the implementation of online activities under both the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol.

3. These additional assets included a video highlighting the impact of the Kigali Amendment on climate action, improved energy efficiency and sustainability in the cooling sector, with a particular focus on cold chains and food loss. Other such assets included infographics and a significant social media package. The materials were developed in line with the theme for World Ozone Day 2021, which was “Montreal Protocol: keeping us, our food and vaccines cool”,¹ and were in addition to the usual output for World Ozone Day, such as posters, a message from the Secretary-General and a video message by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

4. The Secretariat provided support for several online events, with expert contributions to discussions organized by China, Mauritius and the Asia-Pacific region, in conjunction with OzonAction, to mark World Ozone Day. The additional tools developed to support online events and promote World Ozone Day generated 19,057 visits to the World Ozone Day 2021 webpage as at 27 September, an increase of 21 per cent on the webpage for World Ozone Day 2020. For the first

¹ <https://ozone.unep.org/ozone-day/montreal-protocol-keeping-us-our-food-and-vaccines-cool>.

time, the Secretariat also used its newly created social media accounts with Instagram, Facebook and Twitter to promote World Ozone Day 2021. This generated an increased following of 30 per cent, 523 per cent and 341 per cent for the Secretariat’s Instagram, Twitter and Facebook accounts, respectively. Potential views/reach/impressions with support from UNEP totalled 220 million, while the World Ozone Day video was watched approximately 200,000 times on Ozone Secretariat channels.

B. Carbon offsetting for 2020

5. Further to the update provided to the Open-ended Working Group at its forty-third meeting, the Secretariat is completing the process of measuring and offsetting the greenhouse gas emissions created and the operations conducted under the Montreal Protocol in 2020. Operations were scaled down due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Nations Office at Nairobi remained closed to non-essential staff, travel ceased and meetings were held online. Nevertheless, the Secretariat expects a reduced but attributable level of carbon emissions to be offset.

6. Feedback from Sustainable United Nations on carbon data reported for 2020 operations anticipates an offset of 13 tonnes of CO₂-equivalent by the Secretariat. This is a significant reduction on the 1,402 tonnes of CO₂-equivalent for 2019 and reflects the impact of the pandemic on the Secretariat’s operations. Once offset, this will be the seventh consecutive year in which the operations of the Secretariat have been carbon neutral and recorded on our “Greening our meetings” webpage.²

C. Website enhancements

7. Work on developing and enhancing the web-based services offered by the Secretariat continued throughout 2021. Following the successful launch of the Reset Earth³ animation web series, the Reset Earth concept will serve as the foundation for the development of an education portal on the Secretariat’s website. The Reset Earth education portal will host teacher toolkits and student workbooks targeting the 8–10 year age group with specific learner outcomes for the set of three lesson plans, using the three individual Reset Earth episodes that make up the full-length animation as stimulus content. By providing the tools and promoting the inclusion of the ozone layer in lesson plans, the Secretariat hopes to increase awareness among the members of this critical target group.

8. Additional videos will be developed featuring the Reset Earth characters to help bring the lessons to life, stimulating increased awareness and knowledge of the work under the Montreal Protocol, the importance of ozone layer protection and the support provided by the assessment panels to the parties, and wider ozone-related climate impacts.

9. To better inform casual visitors to the Secretariat website and create more awareness around the work of the Montreal Protocol, the Secretariat will be generating “interest stories” for the remainder of 2021 and in 2022, starting with “A Tale of Two Ozones”⁴ and a feature currently under development on one of the substances controlled under the Montreal Protocol – trichlorofluoromethane (CFC-11).

10. To better support the work of the parties, the Secretariat, jointly with the secretariat of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, has further developed and is in the process of updating the “Funding received” section of individual country profile pages.⁵ The section will provide a breakdown of the funding received from the Multilateral Fund by each party operating under paragraph 1 of Article 5 of the Protocol and will be updated after each meeting of the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund. This information will be useful to give an up-to-date snapshot of the funding situation for national ozone units, implementing agencies and other interested users of the website.

11. Subsites continue to be updated and maintained, such as the “facts and figures” and “Development of a filter” options for the “News, video and press” section. In addition, to better support the work of the parties, a new platform has been developed for managing meetings organized by the Secretariat.

² <https://ozone.unep.org/what-ozone-secretariat-doing>.

³ <https://ozone.unep.org/reset-earth>.

⁴ <https://ozone.unep.org/one-gas-two-very-different-impacts-people-and-environment>.

⁵ <https://ozone.unep.org/countries>.

D. Rome Declaration on the Contribution of the Montreal Protocol to Food Loss Reduction through Sustainable Cold Chain Development and the United Nations Food Systems Summit

12. As part of the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit, the Ozone Secretariat has partnered with the Government of Italy, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other relevant organizations and initiatives to coordinate activities that demonstrate the critical role of sustainable cold chains in ensuring food safety and security, decreasing food waste and loss, reducing global warming, and preventing ozone layer depletion. The partnership also aimed to promote the Rome Declaration on the Contribution of the Montreal Protocol to Food Loss Reduction through Sustainable Cold Chain Development. The Declaration, signed by 83 parties to the Montreal Protocol to date, is seen as an important political framework for governments and other stakeholders to commit to the goal of wider availability of and access to sustainable cold chains, and mobilizing action to deliver sustainable cold chains.

13. The online exhibition for sustainable cold chains⁶ was developed jointly by the Ozone Secretariat and the OzonAction Programme of UNEP to demonstrate commercially available cold chain technologies, mainly targeting applications and equipment with refrigeration and cooling cycles that use ozone and climate-friendly refrigerants and have enhanced energy efficiency characteristics. In addition, the exhibition is aimed at identifying and highlighting game-changing and systemic approaches to cold chains. The food cold chain is the primary focus of the United Nations Food Systems Summit, but consideration of cold chains for vaccines is also included.

14. The online exhibition aims to provide access to critical information for policymakers and decision makers, as well as public and private sector end-users, to enable them to identify technological options and stay abreast of the latest state-of-the-art cold chain solutions. It will be available on the Ozone Secretariat website, with nominations from technology and solutions providers being accepted on a continuous basis, and it will be taken over by other relevant initiatives active in the field of cold chains in due course.

15. On 20 September 2021, the partnership, with the support of the Cool Coalition, the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-lived Climate Pollutants and OzonAction, organized an online independent dialogue ahead of the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit, which took place on 23 September. The dialogue on “Sustainable cold chains and the Rome Declaration: delivering efficient ozone and climate-friendly cold chains to ensure nutritious and healthy food for all” highlighted the role of sustainable cold chains, and demonstrated how the Montreal Protocol, the Kigali Amendment thereto and the Rome Declaration all contribute to scaling up technological and policy solutions for sustainable cold chains.

16. The event saw a panel of 20 varied stakeholders sharing their individual perspectives on the multifaceted nature of cold chains and highlighting the solutions and best practices that are available and needed in order to deliver sustainable cold chains. With over 200 participants registered, the event reflected the spirit of the Rome Declaration, which is intended to foster international exchange and collaboration on cold chains. The outcome document and the video recording of the event are available on the Ozone Secretariat website.⁷

17. The Executive Secretary of the Ozone Secretariat delivered opening remarks at the 2021 World Cold Chain Symposium, organized by the Global Food Cold Chain Council and convened on 15 September 2021, in advance of the United Nations Food Systems Summit, on the theme of “Promoting sustainable cold chain: from data to action”.

E. Environmental management system

18. In support of the efforts of the United Nations Secretariat to create climate-smart entities that are aligned with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its 2018 report, and to reduce, by 2030, greenhouse gas emissions from its operations and facilities, the Ozone Secretariat is developing the required environmental management system framework to mitigate and reduce its carbon emissions, particularly for external events and related travel. The system will record and report on the activities and outcomes of the Ozone Secretariat’s work.

⁶ <https://ozone.unep.org/coldchainexhibition/index.html>.

⁷ <https://ozone.unep.org/>.

19. An expert on environmental management systems, with a particular interest in sustainable events management, has been engaged by the Secretariat and is working with the Ozone Secretariat's focal point to develop an environmental management system policy document, guidelines and standard operating procedures tailored to the Ozone Secretariat. It is anticipated that the environmental management system will be in place by the beginning of 2022 with a pilot "stress-test" of the system prior to the forty-fourth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group, planned for July 2022.

F. Safety standards

20. In decision XXIX/11 on safety standards, adopted by the Twenty-Ninth Meeting of the Parties in 2017, the Secretariat was requested to hold regular consultations on safety standards for flammable low-global-warming potential refrigerants with international and regional standards bodies, with a view to providing a tabular overview of such safety standards. The tabular overview was also to include any relevant information submitted on a voluntary basis to the Secretariat by parties or by national and regional standards bodies.

21. In paragraph 4 of decision XXIX/11, the Secretariat was requested to make such information accessible on its website and to ensure an update of the tabular overview at least prior to each meeting of the parties up until the Thirty-Fourth Meeting of the Parties, when parties should consider whether to renew that request to the Secretariat.

22. In response, the Secretariat produced a first version of the requested tabular overview in November 2018,⁸ followed by an updated version in July 2019.⁹ To facilitate access to updated information on safety standards, however, the Secretariat developed an interactive online tool on safety standards systems,¹⁰ available on its website. The information included in the tool is presented in a format similar to the tabular overview, but additionally it offers filtering and search functions to enable the extraction of specific information, as well as functions for exporting and downloading data fields. The Secretariat has been updating the online tool regularly and will include the latest updates on safety standards prior to the online combined meetings.

⁸ UNEP/OzL.Pro.30/INF/3.

⁹ UNEP/OzL.Pro.WG.1/41/INF/3/Rev.1.

¹⁰ <https://ozone.unep.org/system-safety-standards>.