

Marco Gonzalez

Marco Gonzalez is a Senior Expert Member of the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel (TEAP). He advises government agencies as well as Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOS). He was the Executive Secretary of the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and its Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete The Ozone Layer, the Ozone Secretariat, United Nations Environment Programme, from 2002 to 2013.

Mr. Gonzalez was trained as an electrical engineer in Costa Rica and the United Kingdom (UK) to act and use the scientific method as a primary approach to solving engineering problems. He started his career as a power systems engineer in the National Institute of Electricity and Telecommunications of Costa Rica (ICE).

By the early 1980's, a career promotion took Mr. Gonzalez into a managerial position. As Director of the ICE's Central Region. The exposure to infrastructural needs and developmental barriers in the region became both challenges to address and sources of inspiration that moved him to participate in local and national politics.

After 8 years in office of elected positions, one 4-year term in the local government of his hometown and another 4-year term in the National Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica, he was appointed in 1994 Vice-Minister of Natural Resources, Energy and Mines. In the Legislative and Executive branches of the government of Costa Rica Mr Gonzalez focused in local, national, and global environmental issues. He contributed to the creation of the Permanent Legislative Commission on Environment, spearheaded the constitutional amendment "to create the right to a clean and ecologically balanced environment", and led the legislative approval of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), including The Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol.

At the Ministry he contributed to the creation of the Costa Rican System of Payments of Environmental Services and the establishment of the National System of Conservation Areas. He represented Costa Rica in multilateral meetings including the Climate and Ozone Treaties and promoted Costa Rica as a venue for hosting multilateral meetings, including the combined Sixth Conference of the Parties of the Vienna Convention (COP) and the Ninth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol (MOP), hosted by Costa Rica in 1996. The 1996 MOP to the Montreal Protocol elected Marco Gonzalez as Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee (ExCom) of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol (MLF) and in 1997 the MOP elected him as Chair of the ExCom.

In 2002, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr Kofi Annan, appointed Mr Gonzalez to lead the Ozone Secretariat, when he was in a sabbatical period working to raise the level of competitiveness of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), at the National Center of High Technology of Costa Rica.

His vision for the secretariat was of a high-ambition and outcome-relevant secretariat with a clear mandate to advance the protection of life on Earth from the harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation. He continued with the early tradition of Mostafa Tolba to judge Montreal Protocol success not by level of effort but by actual protection of the stratospheric ozone layer and by promoting synergy with other UNEP's goals and MEAs for a clean and healthy Earth.

At the helm of the secretariat, Mr Gonzalez's broad experience combined well with the wealth of experience of the secretariat and the government representatives to organized and service numerous successful multilateral meetings and negotiations. During his tenure, among the most significant accomplishments of the parties were:

- 2007. Reaching the first climate-related adjustment of the protocol to accelerate the phaseout of HCFCs on considerations of climate impacts. This historic decision opened a new era for ozone treaties taking on responsibility to protect the climate. And once the Montreal Protocol was also a climate treaty it was natural to embrace energy efficiency and recovery and destruction of banks;
- 2008. Conducting the first ever paperless meetings in the United Nations in the combined Nineth COP to the Vienna Convention and Twentieth MOP to the Montreal Protocol in Doha, Qatar.
- 2009. Achieving universal ratification of the ozone treaties in 16 September 2009, an old dream of the Ozone Treaties, in fact a dream of all Multilateral Environmental Agreements and keeping this unique status ever since.
- 2010. Celebrating together the successful completion of the production and consumption phase out of CFCs in parties operating under Article 5 of the Montreal Protocol.
- 2002-2013. Working together to galvanize political will to advance the protection of the ozone layer into a transition period to address the growing use of greenhouse gases (HFCs) as alternatives not controlled by the Protocol, while providing technical and policy relevant information supporting the parties' discussions and negotiations to forge a new ozone and climate treaty.

Mr Gonzalez has received numerous recognitions from Governments and organizations around the world. In 2002 he earned the US EPA Stratospheric Ozone Protection Award, in 2007 he was awarded the Champion of the Ozone Layer by the Nobel Laureates Drs Mario Molina, Sherwood Rowland and Paul Krutzen, and peers of the Ozone Layer Community, he also received in 2007 the award of Honorable Environmentalist from Mongolia and in 2008 he earned the US EPA Climate Protection Award.

In 2017, he earned the **UNEP Scientific Leadership Team Award** "For Building and Communicating the Scientific Foundation for the 2007 acceleration of the HCFC Phaseout and the 2016 Kigali Amendment and Decision to phase down HFCs and increase energy efficiency," (earned with Stephen O. Andersen, John S. Daniel, David W. Fahey, Mack McFarland, Guus J.M. Velders, and Durwood Zaelke). And more recently, in 2023, he earned "**The Planetary Guardians Ozone Awards 2023**."

His tenure as Executive Secretary of the Ozone Secretariat was extended two years after the mandatory retirement age by the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr Ban Ki-moon, who attended the unanimous decision of the Meeting of the Parties to retain Mr Gonzalez at the Helm of the Secretariat. He then retired in 2013.

He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Costa Rica and a Master of Science Degree in Power Systems Analysis from the Imperial College of Science and Technology, University of London, England.

He is coauthor of numerous technical, policy papers and books on the Montreal Protocol and climate interactions. Mr Gonzalez is currently completing a new book with co-author Stephen Andersen: "**PROTECTING THE OZONE LAYER & CLIMATE: THE KIGALI ENERGY EFFICIENCY TRIUMPH**"