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## United Nations Environment Programme

**Open-ended Working Group of the Parties to  
the Montreal Protocol on Substances that  
Deplete the Ozone Layer  
Forty-second meeting\***  
Montreal, Canada, 13–17 July 2020

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

#### **Note by the Secretariat**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. The present note aims to summarize issues of relevance to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the activities that have taken place since the previous such note issued in September 2019 (UNEP/OzL.Pro.31/INF/4) that the Secretariat wishes to bring to the attention of the parties. The information is presented in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Some of the activities described in the following sections have been affected by the pandemic.

#### **II. Activities of the Ozone Secretariat**

##### **A. Thirty-five years of the Vienna Convention**

2. To commemorate the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, the Secretariat is collaborating with an external visual design and communication agency to develop an animated cartoon series and complementary game, both for desktop and for smartphone applications, targeting the over 13-years of age teenage bracket. Echoing the theme for World Ozone Day 2020, “Ozone for Life: 35 years of ozone layer protection”, the animated series will feature three main characters symbolizing the three assessment panels of the Montreal Protocol. The characters live in a post-apocalyptic world devoid of ozone and travel back in time to understand why the ozone layer deteriorated, and provide solutions. The same animated figures and storyline will feature in an awareness-raising, educational game that is designed to enhance understanding of the need to protect the ozone layer. It is envisaged that the concept will be developed further to create educational materials and teaching tools targeting children.

3. A video highlighting the work of the scientists, including the work carried out by the British Antarctic Survey in ozone measurements, and the diplomacy efforts under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) that resulted in the adoption of the Vienna Convention, is also planned, the content and development of which is currently dependent on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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\* Some of the items on the provisional agenda for this meeting will be discussed online and others will be deferred to a later date.

## **B. World Ozone Day 2020**

4. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/114, the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer (World Ozone Day) is observed on 16 September every year to commemorate the signing of the Montreal Protocol on 16 September 1987. The theme for World Ozone Day 2020 is “Ozone for Life: 35 years of ozone layer protection”. The theme reflects the milestone of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Vienna Convention, but also celebrates and commemorates the science that first brought the damage to the ozone layer to the world’s attention, highlighting the foundational role of the Vienna Convention in the adoption and implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

5. The theme is visually conceptualized through four posters in the six official languages of the United Nations posted on the Secretariat’s website for wider dissemination, together with communication materials for parties to download. The message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for World Ozone Day 2020 will be shared prior to the day for further dissemination.

6. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which is affecting travel, meetings and gatherings of people, the Secretariat will not request submissions from parties on their planned national commemorative events. It will, instead, assess the feasibility of utilizing the funds designated for World Ozone Day celebrations in an appropriate alternative manner and inform the parties of the options available.

## **C. Carbon offsetting for 2019**

7. As part of its continuing efforts to maintain climate neutrality, the Secretariat has, for the sixth consecutive year, initiated the process to measure the greenhouse gas emissions created during the meetings held and operations conducted under the Montreal Protocol in the previous year (i.e., 2019).

8. The Secretariat has finalized the calculations of the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the travel to meetings of all the participants, including travel to assessment panel meetings and related operations in 2019. At the request of the Government of Italy, the emissions associated with travel by participants and staff of the Secretariat to the Thirty-First Meeting of the Parties and associated meetings held in Rome in November 2019 have been calculated separately and will be offset by the Government of Italy.

9. The remaining carbon footprint for 2019 will be offset through the United Nations online voluntary offsetting platform, administered by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

## **D. Website enhancements**

10. Recent enhancements and upgrades to the Ozone Secretariat website are described below.

### **1. Data centre and charts**

11. The data centre<sup>1</sup> went live at the end of 2019, initially in the form of tables only, which have now been supplemented with graphs and charts.

### **2. Mixtures and blends tool**

12. A new feature on the website, the mixtures and blends tool allows users to search various mixtures and blends, providing the calculation of the controlled substances they represent. It includes a search/filter function on the mixture names and the chemical formulae (for controlled substances), as well as visual graphics illustrating the data flows for the components of the various substances and groups of substances. The tool can be accessed [here](#).

### **3. Interactive tables**

13. Information, previously presented as static tables, is now available in an interactive format and can be found under the “Resources” tab of the website, allowing for search and filter functions in key fields, including:

(a) Recommendations adopted by the Implementation Committee under the Non-Compliance Procedure for the Montreal Protocol since its inception;

(b) Information received from individual parties concerning the establishment and operation of their licensing systems for hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), which is provided in the form of a

<sup>1</sup> <https://ozone.unep.org/countries/data>.

summary table, including the date of ratification of the Kigali Amendment, if applicable, the status of establishment of the licensing systems, and a table displaying statistics;

(c) Requests to the Technical and Economic Assessment Panel for reports, including the year in which the report is required, the type of report, the topic and the source decision.

#### **4. Mobile app: ozone treaties**

14. The mobile handbook application was launched at the Thirtieth Meeting of the Parties. In addition to being updated with the decisions adopted at that meeting, the app has benefited from a number of enhancements, including a dark mode function. The app is available free of charge, both for Android and for iOS, in the respective app stores, Apple and Google Play.

15. The Secretariat is working on new projects that will enhance the digital presence of the ozone treaties and will further facilitate the work of the parties.

#### **E. Ozone treaties logo**

16. In March 2020, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), working with the Secretariat, registered an emblem to provide an enduring visual identity for the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol. The emblem can be seen on the cover of the publication entitled “The Ozone Treaties”.<sup>2</sup> On 31 March 2020, WIPO communicated the emblem to all the States parties to the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property and the members of the World Trade Organization. The emblem is for restricted use in communication campaigns, such as those for World Ozone Day and for meetings of the parties, publications, posters and other materials related to ozone protection. The emblem will not replace the emblems of the United Nations or UNEP in official United Nations documentation. Parties wishing to use the emblem may refer to the visual identity guide, which is available on the Secretariat’s website.<sup>3</sup>

#### **F. Environmental management system**

17. 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 (IPCC) in its 2018 report, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 from its operations and facilities, the Ozone Secretariat is developing the required environmental management system framework to mitigate and reduce its carbon emissions. The system will record and report on the activities and outcomes of the work of the Ozone Secretariat.

18. In consultation with colleagues at Sustainable United Nations and environmental management system focal points from other multilateral environmental agreements, an expert on environmental management systems has been engaged to provide a concept note and budget outlining the tailored support required by each agreement. It is anticipated that a working environmental management system policy framework will be in place within approximately one year from the beginning of active engagement between the Secretariat and the consultant.

#### **G. Gender in the ozone treaties**

19. Building on the “Gender in the Ozone Treaties” background document, issued in 2019, which is available on the Secretariat’s website under Resources/Gender,<sup>4</sup> the Secretariat is developing a gender mainstreaming plan of action. In that regard, Secretariat staff are participating in an online training course on gender and the environment. Thereafter, consultations with colleagues at the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and UNEP will guide further gender mainstreaming opportunities, which will be reported to the parties.

### **III. Cooperation with and contributions to UNEP and other bodies**

#### **A. High-level political forum on sustainable development**

20. The high-level political forum on sustainable development is convened annually under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council to review, among other things, the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

<sup>2</sup> [https://ozone.unep.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/The%20Ozone%20Treaties%20EN%20-%20WEB\\_final.pdf](https://ozone.unep.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/The%20Ozone%20Treaties%20EN%20-%20WEB_final.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> [https://ozone.unep.org/sites/default/files/Ozone\\_treaties\\_logo\\_visual%20identity%20guidelines.pdf](https://ozone.unep.org/sites/default/files/Ozone_treaties_logo_visual%20identity%20guidelines.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> [https://ozone.unep.org/resources?term\\_node\\_tid\\_depth%5B864%5D=864](https://ozone.unep.org/resources?term_node_tid_depth%5B864%5D=864).

21. In January 2020, the Executive Secretary of the Ozone Secretariat, Tina Birmpili, was invited by the President of the Economic and Social Council, Mona Juul, to provide support in ensuring that the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol would provide focused input to the 2020 meeting of the high-level political forum on the theme of “Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”.

22. Accordingly, a report was prepared in coordination with the presidents of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the Thirty-First Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, respectively, outlining, from an ozone protection perspective, how best to accelerate action and achieve transformative pathways to realize the decade of action and delivery for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The report, which was submitted to the high-level political forum, focused on the areas of responsibility of the two governing bodies of the ozone treaties, but also reflected the interrelations of those treaties with the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets. It also highlighted how the governing bodies of the ozone treaties are contributing to accelerating progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The report is available on the website of the high-level political forum.<sup>5</sup>

## **B. Contribution of the Montreal Protocol to the Sustainable Development Goals**

23. Since 1 January 2016, the global population has been striving to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals to address urgent global challenges over a 15-year period, by 2030. The United Nations Statistics Division has prepared annual reports outlining progress made in the implementation of the Goals. In response to a request from UNEP for input to the 2020 report, in January 2020 the Secretariat provided a storyline on Sustainable Development Goal 12 (Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns), indicator 12.4.1 (Number of parties to international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement).

## **C. Strategy for private sector engagement and its implementation plan**

24. UNEP developed its first five-year strategy for private sector engagement<sup>6</sup> which was submitted to Member States during the 2019 annual meeting of the subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP and endorsed on 11 October 2019. The strategy is intended to guide UNEP engagement with the private sector in alignment with the targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UNEP programme of work. While the engagement of the multilateral environmental agreements with the private sector will depend on their scope of work and mandate, UNEP has requested that the strategy be circulated to the governing bodies of the agreements for information purposes.

## **D. Fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP@50)**

25. The fiftieth anniversary of UNEP, “UNEP@50”, will provide an opportunity to take stock of progress made to protect the environment and human wellbeing under the auspices of the Programme. The fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, scheduled for February 2021, is planned as the launch platform for UNEP@50 events.

26. The Ozone Secretariat intends to harmonize its informational activities with UNEP@50 events in 2022 to actively promote the Montreal Protocol as one of the UNEP success stories. The Secretariat will provide details of UNEP@50 events for the period 2021–2022 to the parties as the relevant plans are firmed up.

## **E. World Environment Situation Room**

27. The World Environment Situation Room is a UNEP online knowledge platform that allows users to monitor the status of the world environment through satellite imagery; geospatial, statistical and reported data; and observations, models, scenarios and story maps. The initiative is coordinated by the Science Division of UNEP and involves the secretariats of the multilateral environmental

<sup>5</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=30022&nr=2460&menu=3170>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/factsheet/strategy-private-sector-engagement>.

agreements. An initial version is available on the UNEP website and it is undergoing further development.<sup>7</sup>

28. As a participant in the initiative, the Secretariat has been working towards integrating information related to the Vienna Convention and its Montreal Protocol, which comprise one of a few demonstration projects to be showcased at the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly to be held in Nairobi in February 2021.

## **F. Small island developing States**

29. Every year, UNEP provides input to the Secretary-General's report on the follow-up to and implementation of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway,<sup>8</sup> in which countries recognized the need to support and invest in those States to achieve sustainable development. In response to a request by UNEP relevant to its contribution to the Secretary-General's report, the Ozone Secretariat provided, in April 2020, updated information on the implementation of the phase-out of ozone-depleting substances and HFCs, including the status of ratification of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol by small island developing States.

## **G. Disability Inclusions Strategy**

30. The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy outlines the Secretary-General's commitment to ensure that the United Nations is an inclusive organization for all. In order to enable UNEP to comply with its reporting obligations, the Ozone Secretariat was requested to provide feedback on three indicators. The Secretariat was able to respond positively in terms of access to its offices and conference venues (indicators 6 and 6.1) for persons with comprised mobility. With regard to indicator 12, the Secretariat does not, as yet, engage in any inter-agency coordination and, with regard to indicator 3, it does not have a disability strategy or policy in place.

## **H. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development**

31. The Secretariat has been participating in the ongoing "Partnership of international organizations for effective international rulemaking", a voluntary platform initiated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The Secretariat's input has focused on strengthening the implementation of international instruments such as the Montreal Protocol.

32. The main components of the partnership include building understanding of the variety of international instruments that exist; strengthening the implementation of international instruments; ensuring efficient stakeholder engagement; encouraging a culture of evaluation of international organizations and instruments; and maximizing opportunities for coordination across international organizations. The work will continue until 2021 when the Organization is expected to publish a set of principles in the compendium of practices for effective international rulemaking.

## **I. Cooperation with the secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention**

33. The Secretariat continues its cooperation with the secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) on the basis of the memorandum of understanding signed between the two secretariats in 2012.<sup>9</sup> In September 2019, the Ozone Secretariat supported the participation of a co-chair of the Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee in the 2019 meeting of the Phytosanitary Measures Research Group, held in Cairns, Australia, from 24 to 27 September 2019. At the invitation of the IPPC secretariat, in February 2020 the Ozone Secretariat submitted, in consultation with the Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee, a report for the information of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures at its fifteenth session. In that report an invitation was extended to qualified technical experts of the IPPC Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments to consider participating in the Committee through the nomination procedure established under the Montreal Protocol. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the fifteenth session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures, originally scheduled to take place in Rome from 30 March to 3 April 2020, has been postponed until further notice.

<sup>7</sup> Available at <https://wesr.unep.org>.

<sup>8</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sids2014/samoapathway>.

<sup>9</sup> Available at [www.ippc.int/static/media/uploads/mou\\_btwn\\_ozone\\_&\\_ippc\\_signed.pdf](http://www.ippc.int/static/media/uploads/mou_btwn_ozone_&_ippc_signed.pdf).

## **VI. Secretariat participation in relevant events and meetings from October 2019 to June 2020**

34. Between October 2019 and July 2020, the Secretariat undertook or planned to undertake a number of missions, described below, to further the goals of the Montreal Protocol.<sup>10</sup>

### **A. Third meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020**

35. The Secretariat participated in the third meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, held in Bangkok from 1 to 4 October 2019.<sup>11</sup> The fourth meeting of the intersessional process was scheduled to take place in Bucharest in March 2020, but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

36. The purpose of these meetings is to support stakeholders in their efforts to elaborate the future arrangements of the Strategic Approach and the sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020 for consideration and adoption at the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management to be held in Bonn, Germany, from 5 to 9 July 2021 (new rescheduled date).

### **B. Green Customs Initiative meeting**

37. The Secretariat participated in the fourteenth meeting of the Green Customs Initiative organized by UNEP, as the secretariat of the Initiative, in Geneva on 2 and 3 October 2019. Other multilateral environmental agreement secretariats participating in the meeting included those of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Minamata Convention on Mercury as well as the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, in addition to the Montreal Protocol. Other entities whose work involves customs issues (the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Customs Organization, INTERPOL as well as the secretariat of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction) also attended the meeting.

38. Participants in the meeting considered capacity-building issues and a project proposal to develop an agreed green customs curriculum for customs officers globally; improving communication among partners; and the urgent need to migrate the current training modules available on the World Customs Organization CLiKC! site to a new platform and new training software as these will not be supported after the end of 2020. Participants also considered expanding outreach via the Green Customs Initiative website, which is to be overhauled, and social media.

### **C. Inter-agency meeting on environmental law**

39. The Secretariat participated in the meeting organized by UNEP in Geneva from 26 to 28 November 2019 to introduce the Fifth Montevideo Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law (Montevideo V). UNEP made a proposal regarding how it intended to implement Montevideo V by suggesting a clearing house approach and emphasizing partnerships to give support to countries upon request.

40. The proposed partnerships to implement Montevideo V include focusing on the structure and implementation mechanism rather than identifying particular legal topics to be addressed. It provides for UNEP to serve as the secretariat with a mandate including:

- (a) Cooperation with multilateral environmental agreement secretariats to ensure mutual supportiveness of efforts and enhanced fundraising;
- (b) The designation of national focal points by Governments (including criteria for who these should be) to provide guidance through biennial meetings;
- (c) The establishment of a steering committee to work with the secretariat to implement the programme and to prepare meetings of the focal points;

<sup>10</sup> The list includes events in which the Secretariat plans to participate and may be subject to change.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.saicm.org/Beyond2020/IntersessionalProcess/ThirdIntersessionalmeeting/tabid/8024/language/en-US/Default.aspx>.

(d) The definition of strategic activities (e.g., the elaboration of guidance and tools; the exchange of information; and the promotion of public participation, the link with the United Nations Charter and collaboration through partnerships) and implementation guidelines (e.g., respond to countries' needs, involve stakeholders and public participation, avoid duplication, be grounded in science).

41. The substantive legal issues to be addressed are to be identified by countries, which can request particular assistance through an online portal that is yet to be developed.

#### **D. Exploratory mission to Tashkent**

42. On 4 and 5 March 2020, the Secretariat team travelled to Tashkent, where the joint twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the Thirty-Second Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol is scheduled to be held from 23 to 27 November 2020, and held meetings with the Government of Uzbekistan. Consultations in that regard are ongoing due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **E. Technology and Economic Assessment Panel meeting**

43. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the annual meeting of the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel was held online over several sessions from 29 April to 8 May 2020. The Secretariat organized and attended all the online sessions.

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