



Distr.: General
24 May 2021

English only



**United Nations
Environment
Programme**

**Open-ended Working Group of the Parties to
the Montreal Protocol on Substances that
Deplete the Ozone Layer
Forty-third meeting
Bangkok, 21, 22 and 24 May and 14–17 July 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 provides an overview of issues of relevance to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, and related activities that have taken place since the issuance of the previous such note (UNEP/OzL.Pro.32/INF/3) in September 2020. Some of the activities have been affected by the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

II. Activities of the Ozone Secretariat

A. Global launch of Reset Earth

2. The Reset Earth animation and game app, designed to inform younger children and teenagers about the importance of ozone layer protection, were launched in January and February 2021 respectively. The launches were widely publicized, including by mainstream and gaming media outlets and children's media and websites. The animation and the game featured in more than 600 articles covering 32 countries. The animation has already been watched more than 1 million times, and the game has been downloaded more than 37,000 times for iOS and Android mobile phone use. Through the social media channels of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) alone, the Reset Earth campaign has reached at least 20 million people on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. The Secretariat is grateful for the contribution made by the European Union towards the production of Reset Earth.

3. The Reset Earth concept will form the basis of the education platform to be developed by the Secretariat in 2021. The Reset Earth game will be adapted for desktop use in a classroom setting as an interactive teaching tool. Further development of the Reset Earth brand is anticipated in 2022. These new digital assets will serve as teaching aids to populate and revitalize the education portal, as well as support awareness-raising and commemorative efforts in connection with the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Montreal Protocol.

* Some agenda items will be discussed in online meetings to be held on 22 and 24 May and 14–17 July 2021, and others will be deferred to the combined twelfth meeting (part II) of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and Thirty-Third Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, to be held in October and November 2021.

B. World Ozone Day 2021

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 2021 is “Montreal Protocol: keeping us, our food and vaccines cool”. The theme reflects the growing impact of the Montreal Protocol and its Kigali Amendment on climate change mitigation including through sustainable cold chain and food loss reduction.

5. The theme is visually conceptualized through posters in the six official languages of the United Nations, which, together with communication materials, are available on the Secretariat’s website¹ for parties to download. In addition, a video in support of the theme and its messaging, alongside a video message from the Executive Director of UNEP, will be produced for dissemination on World Ozone Day 2021. The message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for World Ozone Day 2021 will be shared prior to the day for further dissemination.

6. Because the ongoing pandemic, which continues to affect meetings and other gatherings, the Secretariat will not request submissions from parties on their planned national commemorative events. However, the Secretariat will ensure that a comprehensive menu of digital assets is made available for online dissemination. The Secretariat will also assess the feasibility of using the funds designated for World Ozone Day 2021 celebrations in an appropriate alternative manner and will inform the parties accordingly.

C. Carbon offsetting for 2020

7. As part of its continuing efforts to maintain climate neutrality, the Secretariat has, for the seventh consecutive year, measured the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the online meetings held and operations conducted under the Montreal Protocol in the previous year (2020). Once the calculations have been verified and the totals confirmed, the Secretariat’s carbon footprint for 2020 will be offset through the United Nations online voluntary offsetting platform, administered by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

D. Initiatives to enhance the Secretariat’s online presence

8. Responding to the growing use of social media platforms for information and entertainment purposes, the Secretariat has begun developing its own social media profile and following, specifically on Twitter,² Instagram³ and Facebook.⁴ The recent growth in the Secretariat’s communication awareness, assets and features development and its comprehensive social media outreach schedule warrant expansion into the wider information networks. Through these channels, the Secretariat hopes to develop a closer connection with the general public as well as the parties and other ozone stakeholders and inform them more effectively about developments relevant for the protection of the ozone layer. In turn, the Secretariat’s anticipated growing social media presence is expected to nurture a following among the general public as part of the Secretariat’s awareness outreach strategy.

E. Montreal Protocol and gender

9. Building on the “Gender in the Ozone Treaties” background document, released in 2019,⁵ the Secretariat continues to liaise with colleagues at the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and UNEP to advise on gender mainstreaming opportunities. The Communications Officer of the Secretariat has been designated its gender focal point and is participating in the newly formed multilateral environmental agreements gender focal points forum. A more focused gender lens will be applied to the Secretariat’s website during the course of 2021, with an “Ozone treaties and gender” subsection anticipated for development later in the year under the “Ozone and you” section of the website.⁶

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

² <https://twitter.com/UNEPozone>.

³ www.instagram.com/unepozone.

⁴ www.facebook.com/UNEPozone

⁵ Available at https://ozone.unep.org/resources?term_node_tid_depth%5B864%5D=864.

⁶ <https://ozone.unep.org/ozone-and-you>.

III. Cooperation with and contributions to the United Nations Environment Programme and other bodies

A. 2021 High-level political forum on sustainable development

10. 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. In March 2021, the Ozone Secretariat submitted a report to the high-level political forum on sustainable development in response to an invitation from the President of the Economic and Social Council, Mr. Munir Akram.

11. The report presented the work of the parties to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol up to the end of 2020 in relation to the theme of the 2021 high-level political forum, “Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”. More specifically, the report highlighted the recent contributions of the ozone treaties to the Sustainable Development Goals under in-depth review by the High-Level Political Forum in 2021 – Goal 1 on no poverty, Goal 2 on zero hunger, Goal 3 on good health and well-being, Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth, Goal 10 on reduced inequalities, Goal 12 on responsible consumption and production, Goal 13 on climate action, Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions, and Goal 17 on partnerships for the goals – taking into account the integrated, indivisible and interlinked nature of the Goals.

12. The report was prepared in coordination with the presidents of the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the Thirty-Second Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, respectively. It is available on the website of the high-level political forum.⁷

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

13. In connection with the preparation of the 2021 Sustainable Development Goals report by the United Nations Statistics Division, in January 2021 the Secretariat provided updated metadata information related to 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). The submitted information can be accessed through the Division’s repository, which is currently under development.⁸

14. Furthermore, the Secretariat participates in broader United Nations inter-agency collaboration to streamline methodologies and processes relating to Goal 12 and build a common platform entitled the “SDG 12 Hub”. Through this collaboration, the custodian agencies aim to gather all relevant information in one place and improve the accessibility of Goal 12 reporting for Governments; improve the transparency of Goal 12 data and progress in its implementation for national focal points and other relevant stakeholders; raise awareness of Goal 12; and facilitate access to data and solutions for the implementation of Goal 12 and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

C. United Nations Environment Programme Environmental Rights Coordination Group

15. Along with other multilateral environmental agreement secretariats hosted by UNEP, the Ozone Secretariat continues to participate in the UNEP Environmental Rights Coordination Group. The Group was set up by the Law Division of UNEP in response to the Secretary-General’s appeal “The Highest Aspiration: A Call to Action for Human Rights”, launched at the opening of the 43rd session of the Human Rights Council, on 24 February 2020, which stressed the importance of the nexus of human rights and the environment. The role of the Coordination Group is to identify areas and actions for mainstreaming the concept of human rights and the environment into global work on environmental sustainability in a more coordinated and systematic manner.

16. During the quarterly meetings of the Coordination Group, multilateral environmental agreement secretariats are updated on the work of UNEP in this area, including contributions made on

⁷https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/27267Vienna_Convention_on_the_Protection_of_the_Ozone_Layer_input_2021.pdf

⁸ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/metadata/>.

environmental human rights to the mid-term strategy of UNEP for 2021–2023, the fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, which took place in February 2021, and the forty-sixth session of the Human Rights Council which took place in February and March 2021. A consultation between the Group and the Special Rapporteur on the right to development was also conducted online on 9 February 2021.

D. World Environment Situation Room

17. The World Environment Situation Room is a UNEP online knowledge platform that allows users to monitor the status of the global environment through satellite imagery; geospatial, statistical and reported data; and observations, models, scenarios and story maps.⁹ The initiative is coordinated by the Science Division of UNEP and involves the secretariats of the multilateral environmental agreements. As a participant in the initiative, the Secretariat has been working to integrate information related to the Vienna Convention and its Montreal Protocol, which, in November 2020, led to the setup of a World Environment Situation Room page on ozone layer protection.¹⁰ Efforts to present ozone-related data and information in the form of maps and other types of infographics are ongoing.

E. Disability Inclusion Strategy

18. The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy outlines the Secretary-General's commitment to ensuring that the United Nations is an inclusive organization for all. The Secretariat participates in a United Nations Volunteers initiative, funded by Germany and Sweden, to provide fully funded national United Nations Volunteer specialist assignments for persons with disabilities. In addition, the Communications Officer is the newly designated disability focal point for the Secretariat.

19. In accordance with United Nations guidelines based on the web content accessibility guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium standards, the Secretariat will ensure that web accessibility encompasses all disabilities that affect access to the web. It will do this by using easily readable text and ensuring that content is well organized and the design and layout are clean and simple.

20. The Secretariat has promoted the participation of delegates and stakeholders with disabilities at its meetings by ensuring that conference and meeting venues are accessible to persons with disabilities. Accessibility information is provided in the information note and invitation letter sent to the parties.

F. Cooperation with the secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention

21. The Secretariat continues its cooperation with the secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention on the basis of the memorandum of understanding signed between the two secretariats in 2012.¹¹ 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, was postponed and was held virtually instead on 16 March, 8 March and 1 April 2021. At the invitation of the International Plant Protection Convention secretariat, in February 2021 the Ozone Secretariat submitted, in consultation with the Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee, an updated report for the information of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures at its fifteenth session.¹² In that report an invitation was extended to qualified technical experts of the International Plant Protection Convention Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments to consider participating in the Committee through the nomination procedure established under the Montreal Protocol. Additionally, it was suggested that a technical report might be prepared on ways in which methyl bromide use could be reduced for quarantine and pre-shipment applications.

⁹ Available at <https://wesr.unep.org/>.

¹⁰ Available at <https://wesr.unep.org/topic/index/27>.

¹¹ Memorandum of understanding between the Ozone Secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on behalf of the secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention on collaboration on issues related to methyl bromide, available at www.ippc.int/static/media/uploads/mou_btwn_ozone_&_ippc_signed.pdf.

¹² International Plant Protection Convention, document CPM 2021/INF/08, available at www.ippc.int/en/cpm-sessions/cpm-15/.

IV. Secretariat participation in relevant events and meetings from October 2020 to July 2021

22. Between October 2020 and July 2021, the Secretariat participated or plans to participate in the following meetings to further the goals of the Montreal Protocol.¹³

23. The Secretariat participated in the technical meeting of the partnership of international organizations for effective international rulemaking held on 29 April 2021. The partnership, which operates under the aegis of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), is finalizing a compendium of international organizations' practices to foster more effective international instruments, which is to be launched at the eighth annual meeting of international organizations in September 2021. The OECD secretariat gave an update on progress in finalizing the compendium, provided an overview of the objectives of the eighth annual meeting, and outlined proposals for the future of the partnership.

24. Participants also considered the issue of better regulation in the face of innovation by reflecting on the OECD draft principles on agile regulatory governance to harness innovation. The draft principles aim to respond to many of the challenges faced by domestic regulators in developing fast, effective, inclusive and relevant responses to innovation – challenges that also apply to international organizations. Because innovative technologies develop faster than regulations and social structures, they present serious regulatory challenges. The discussion sought the experience of international organizations on the international instruments and frameworks for regulatory co-operation that have been used in the face of innovation, with a focus on outlining success factors and challenges in the traditional international rulemaking processes to tackle quickly evolving policy challenges. The discussion focused on priority areas of work to adapt international rulemaking to a world of fast-paced, often inherently transboundary innovative technologies.

¹³ The list includes events in which the Secretariat plans to participate. It is subject to change.