
**Montreal Protocol
on Substances that
Deplete the Ozone Layer**

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**Open-ended Working Group of the Parties
to the Montreal Protocol on Substances
that Deplete the Ozone Layer
Forty-fifth meeting
Bangkok, 3–7 July 2023**

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 since the previous such note (UNEP/OzL.Pro.34/INF/3), or will take place in the coming months, that the Secretariat wishes to bring to the attention of the parties.

II. Activities of the Ozone Secretariat

A. Global launch of education platform's *Apollo's Edition*

2. The Secretariat developed new academic material targeting students aged 13–18 years, to complement the existing academic material available on the education platform to support teaching about the vital work of the Montreal Protocol and protection of the ozone layer.

3. *Apollo's Edition* was officially launched on the International Day of Education, 24 January 2023, comprising lesson guidelines for teachers, student worksheets, an environmental simulator game, explainer videos and links to other resources.¹ The materials, which are free of charge, have been designed to maximize accessibility for users with access or technical constraints.

4. By the end of March 2023, *Apollo's Edition* content had reached 18.6 million people directly through the Secretariat's social media channels (Twitter, Instagram and Facebook), with over 3,500 downloads of the education materials.

B. World Ozone Day 2023

5. 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 Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer on 16 September 1987. The theme for World Ozone Day 2023 is "Montreal Protocol: fixing the ozone layer and reducing climate change", noting the continued positive contribution by the Protocol to the protection of the ozone layer, nature and biodiversity, and climate change mitigation.

¹ <https://ozone.unep.org/apollo-edition>.

6. The theme reiterates the most recent findings by the Scientific Assessment Panel 2022 Quadrennial Assessment report that notes, among other things, that the ozone layer continues to be on track towards recovery and that ratification of the Kigali Amendment will avoid up to 0.5°C, an increase of 0.1°C from previous estimates, of global warming by the end of the century.

7. The theme will be visually conceptualized through posters in the six official languages of the United Nations, which, together with communication materials, will be available on the Secretariat Ozone Day website² for parties to download. In addition, a comprehensive social media pack, infographics, a video in support of the theme and its messaging, and a video message from the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), will be produced for dissemination on World Ozone Day. The message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for World Ozone Day 2023 will be shared closer to the day for further dissemination.

8. As in previous years, the Secretariat would like to request submissions from parties on their planned national commemorative events to share on social media and on the World Ozone Day 2023 dedicated webpage. In support of a small number of developing countries, as a contribution towards the cost of organizing national activities to commemorate World Ozone Day, the Secretariat is able to provide limited financial assistance.

C. Finalization and first meetings review report of the Environmental Management System

9. In line with the United Nations Secretariat “Strategy for Sustainability Management in the UN System 2020–2030”, the Ozone Secretariat embarked on the process of developing an environmental management system in 2021. The intention of an entity’s environmental management system is to not only offset its annual carbon emissions, but also to actively reduce its carbon footprint. The Secretariat’s environmental management system, which was adopted by the Secretariat in early 2022, is tailored to assess, monitor and reduce its carbon footprint with respect to travel and external events.

10. The system was applied to both the Open-ended Working Group at its forty-fourth meeting and the Thirty-Fourth Meeting of the Parties. Sixteen steps under the environmental management system event procedure checklist include, among other things, sharing system resources with suppliers, hosts and participants before the event and inviting compliance, following-up on and observing onsite practices and auditing environmental aspects during the event, and evaluating compliance with the environmental management system guidelines and preparing reports with recommendations for improvement after the event.

11. Post-meeting evaluations confirmed that 100 per cent of applicable events attempted the procedure, with the Open-ended Working Group at its forty-fourth meeting achieving 65 per cent of procedure steps and the Thirty-Fourth Meeting of the Parties achieving 53 per cent. The events were measured with respect to complying with minimum organizer guidelines applicable to events, such as measuring supplier compliance, ensuring paperless meetings, reducing or banning single-use plastics, offering sustainable food options, ensuring sustainable waste management, and offsetting the air travel of participants, among others. The full report and environmental management system analysis will be made available on a newly designed “Greening our meetings” webpage (within the Secretariat website).

D. Global release of the Scientific Assessment Panel 2022 Quadrennial Assessment Report on the ozone layer

12. The Ozone Secretariat supported the launch of the Scientific Assessment Panel 2022 Quadrennial Assessment Report on the ozone layer in early January 2023. A media campaign supported by UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization that focused on the latest updates on the state of the ozone layer, as well as a new chapter on geoengineering, generated worldwide media interest. In the following week, the news story was featured in 3,358 articles published in 2,255 media outlets across 99 countries in 22 languages. In addition, Scientific Assessment Panel co-chairs and other members and contributing authors contributed through media and radio interviews with AFP, Reuters, CNN, BBC, New York Times, Washington Post, Le Monde, Deutsche Welle and Al Jazeera, among others.

² <https://ozone.unep.org/ozone-day/montreal-protocol-fixing-the-zone-layer-and-reducing-climate-change>.

E. Development of a dedicated webpage on gender

13. To review the work of the Montreal Protocol with a perspective on gender, the Secretariat intends to develop a webpage that will provide information on the gender split for meetings, the assessment panels and Ozone Secretariat personnel, include a news and information section, and inform the user on gender mainstreaming among the implementing partners, among others.

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

A. Participation of the Ozone Secretariat at UNFCCC COP27

14. The Ozone Secretariat attended the 27th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as an observer. It was held in November 2022 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. During the conference, the launch event for the joint report of UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on the sustainable cold chain, to which the Ozone Secretariat contributed as a partner and reviewer in the development process (see section D below), was held on 12 November 2022 at the pavilion of Italy on the day dedicated to agriculture and adaptation. The report highlights the importance of the Rome Declaration on “the contribution of the Montreal Protocol to sustainable cold chain development for food loss and waste reduction” as a political platform for cooperation and action. The summary of the session is available on the Ozone Secretariat website.³

B. Seventeenth session of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures

15. The Secretariat continued 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. Although the memorandum expired at the end of 2017, the cooperation between the two secretariats has continued. Discussions on a new memorandum of understanding are ongoing.

16. At the invitation of the International Plant Protection Convention secretariat, in February 2023 the Ozone Secretariat submitted, in consultation with the Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee, an updated report⁴ for the information of the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures at its seventeenth session, held from 27 to 31 March 2023 in Rome. In the report, the technical options committee highlighted the key relevant messages of its 2022 quadrennial report and extended once again an invitation to qualified technical experts of the International Plant Protection Convention Technical Panel on Phytosanitary Treatments in methyl bromide use for quarantine and related phytosanitary issues to consider participating in the Committee through the nomination procedure established under the Montreal Protocol.

17. The report also communicated decision XXXIV/10, on stocks and quarantine and pre-shipment uses of methyl bromide, adopted by the Thirty-Fourth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, and outlined several activities on matters of common concern that might benefit from collaboration and would enhance coherence between the two treaties.

C. Collaboration with the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions to train female delegates

18. The three-day training workshops, held in Geneva from 6 to 8 February 2023, combined an online training component, with the aim of enhancing the skills and knowledge of government officials to effectively chair and negotiate at various types of convention and treaty meetings. The training addressed practical and procedural issues encountered by chairs and negotiators of international meetings, encompassing preparations for chairing and negotiating, rules of procedure, administrative matters related to the operation of various meetings, as well as chairing techniques and skills.

³ <https://ozone.unep.org/unep-and-unfao-launch-cold-chain-report-cop27>.

⁴ https://assets.ippc.int/static/media/files/publication/en/2023/03/IPPC_CPM-17_Report_by_the_Ozone_Secretariat_INF08.pdf.

D. Development of video on cold chain

19. Within the scope of cooperation between the Ozone Secretariat and FAO under the Rome Declaration on the role of sustainable cold chains and as a follow up to the process of the United Nations Food Systems Summit of 2021, an animated [video](#) was jointly produced that complemented the report, entitled “Sustainable food cold chains: opportunities, challenges and the way forward”. The video describes the importance of temperature-controlled storage and transport along the agrifood value chain. It highlights some global solutions such as the Montreal Protocol, its Kigali Amendment, and the Rome Declaration on food cold chains. It has been produced with subtitles in all UN languages and is available at the links below.⁵

E. Right to a healthy environment and linkages to the Montreal Protocol

20. Decision XVI/34, on cooperation between the Secretariat of the Montreal Protocol and other related conventions and international organizations, requested the Secretariat:

- a. To seek opportunities to enhance its cooperation with other relevant conventions or organizations that pertain to issues related to the Montreal Protocol either, resources permitting, by attending meetings or through the exchange of factual information, including schedules of meetings;
- b. To report to the Meeting of the Parties of the Montreal Protocol on any meetings of other conventions or organizations that it attends, any substantive contacts that it has with the relevant secretariats, and any information provided to or requested by these secretariats, mindful at all times that the Secretariat of the Montreal Protocol cannot provide any legal interpretation of the provisions of the Protocol;
- c. To monitor developments in other related conventions and organizations of interest to the parties to the Montreal Protocol and to report on such developments to the Meeting of the Parties of the Montreal Protocol;
- d. To reflect on ways of enhancing information flows on matters of common interest with the other related conventions and organizations of interest to the parties to the Montreal Protocol.

21. In 2020, the Secretary-General called on the United Nations system to take action to support Member States in integrating the human right to a healthy environment in decision-making. The same year, the Law Division of UNEP established an internal environmental rights coordination group involving the participation of secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements to discuss the evolution of the work relevant to the human right to a healthy environment, and how it is being integrated into the work of UNEP. The Ozone Secretariat participated in the coordination group meetings in 2021 and 2022.

22. The United Nations General Assembly recognized, in resolution 76/300 of 28 July 2022, the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment. Paragraph 3 of that resolution “affirms that the promotion of the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment requires the full implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements under the principles of international environmental law”.

23. A growing number of initiatives are being developed within UNEP on the issue, including a joint information note from UNEP, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on the right to a

⁵ Additional language options

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZKb0c-hgWI> (Arabic)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L259E7NID0c> (Chinese)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrkFpYZzjRU> (French)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xdryas0fQj0> (Russian)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TukHthyB6-4> (Spanish)

healthy environment.⁶ Other multilateral environmental agreements are also conducting activities and discussions on the issue, including side events to conferences of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants sharing information on a human-rights-based approach to pollution.⁷ Parties to the UNFCCC recognized in the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan, at the 27th session of the Conference of the Parties, that parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights and the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

24. Considering decision XVI/34 and recent developments at UNEP and at other multilateral environmental agreements, the Secretariat is exploring potential linkages between the right to a healthy environment and the Montreal Protocol. An information note will be prepared for the attention of the parties at their Thirty-Sixth Meeting on the right to a healthy environment, the work of UNEP and of other multilateral environmental agreements on the issue, as well as possible implications and relevance for the Montreal Protocol. Side events may also be organized on the issue.

F. Support to the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment

25. The Secretariat provided legal support to the second session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (Paris, 29 May–2 June 2023). The committee discussed the preparation of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, using a working document on potential options for elements towards an international legally binding instrument prepared by the Secretariat as the basis for its work. The third session of the committee is expected to take place from 13 to 17 November 2023 in Nairobi.

IV. Secretariat participation in events from December 2022 to June 2023

26. Between December 2022 and June 2023, the Secretariat undertook several missions and participated in the meetings set out below.⁸

A. Fortieth meeting of the International Management Group on Environmental Sustainability

27. The Ozone Secretariat attended the online fortieth meeting of the International Management Group on Environmental Sustainability on 7 and 9 March 2023. During the sessions, environmental management system updates were presented by various United Nations entities as well as lessons learned in the field relating to making United Nations entities greener and more sustainable.

28. It is anticipated that the Secretariat will also attend the forty-first meeting, the first in-person meeting since the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, scheduled to take place in October 2023.

B. Ninety-first and ninety-second meetings of the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol

29. The Ozone Secretariat participated in the ninety-first meeting of the Executive Committee, held in person from 5 to 9 December 2022 in Montreal, Canada. The Secretariat also attended the

⁶ What is the Right to a Healthy Environment? - Information Note, OHCHR, UNEP, UNDP, January 2023, <https://www.unep.org/resources/publication/what-right-healthy-environment-information-note>.

⁷ Such as the side events to the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions in 2023: Advancing a Human Rights-based Approach to Pollution for People and the Planet, organized by OHCHR, UNEP, UNDP, the International Labour Organization, the Economic Commission for Europe, FAO, the secretariat of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, the United Nations Environment Management Group, and the Geneva Environment Network, 10 May 2023.

⁸ The list includes events in which the Secretariat plans to participate and may be subject to change.

ninety-second meeting of the Executive Committee, which was held in person from 29 May to 2 June 2023 in Montreal, Canada.

C. Open-ended working group meeting on a science-policy panel

30. The Ozone Secretariat participated in the resumed first session of the ad hoc open-ended working group on a science-policy panel that focuses on the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution, held from 30 January to 3 February 2023 in Bangkok. The establishment of such a panel is provided for in resolution 5/8 adopted at the resumed fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme in March 2022. The Ozone Secretariat is contributing information and lessons learned from the Montreal Protocol's assessment process.

31. The key outcomes of the meeting were a draft on the scope and the principal functions of the science-policy panel, the organization of work of the ad hoc open-ended working group, and a list of documents to be prepared for its next two sessions. While the third and last session of the working group is scheduled to take place from 17 to 21 June 2024 in Geneva, the final time and venue of the second session will be communicated by 1 July 2023 at the latest.

D. Resumed fourth session of the Intersessional Process of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management

32. The Ozone Secretariat participated in the resumed fourth session of the Intersessional Process for Considering the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste Beyond 2020 (IP4), held from 27 February to 3 March 2023 in Nairobi. The Strategic Approach is a voluntary, multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral policy framework to promote chemical safety around the world.

33. The key outcome of the meeting was a single consolidated document⁹ setting out the vision, scope, strategic objectives and targets of the instrument along with several important elements such as capacity-building, financial considerations, institutional arrangements and progress stocktaking. The document is expected to be finalized in another resumed meeting of the fourth session of the Intersessional Process scheduled immediately prior to the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management, to be held from 25 to 29 September 2023 in Bonn, Germany.

E. Meeting of the scientific advisory group on ozone and solar ultraviolet radiation

34. The Secretariat participated in the 2023 meeting of the scientific advisory group on ozone and solar ultraviolet radiation, formed under the Global Atmosphere Watch programme of the World Meteorological Organization, held online from 9 to 11 May 2023.

F. Green Customs Initiative Annual Meeting

35. The seventeenth meeting of the Green Customs Initiative (GCI) partners was hosted by the OzonAction Compliance Assistance Programme of UNEP at the UNEP offices in Paris on 24 and 25 January 2023. Participants noted the significant role played by customs in advancing compliance with multilateral environmental agreements. They further expressed support to GCI and commended the Initiative's activities and recognition by the United Nations General Assembly resolution on preventing and combating crimes that affect the environment. The enforcement activities like Operation Thunder 2022 and Operation Demeter VIII, the Green Customs Global Conference, relevant outcomes of 2022 conferences of parties to multilateral environmental agreements, joint customs training and development of customs national curricula and the green customs guide to multilateral environmental agreements, were discussed. There were additional sessions on fostering multilateral environmental agreement synergies, particularly between the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions and the Montreal Protocol to the Vienna Convention, implementing new customs harmonized codes and on strengthening the GCI.

9

https://www.saicm.org/Portals/12/documents/meetings/IP4_2/INTERSESSIONAL%20PROCESS%20SINGLE%20CONSOLIDATED%20DOCUMENT%20as%20corrected%20per%20Plenary%20discussion%203%20March%202023.pdf

G. Meeting with the Gulf Cooperation Council on the ratification of the Kigali Amendment

36. On 12 and 13 March 2023, the Secretariat attended the technical and coordination meeting in Riyadh, organized by the Gulf Cooperation Council and the West Asia Regional Network, to discuss the road map for the development and adoption of standards, under the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, and the ratification of the Amendment.

H. Meeting of the Assessment Panels

37. The Ozone Secretariat attended the meeting of the co-chairs of the Assessment Panels on 20 and 21 April 2023 in London on the preparation of a synthesis report of the three 2022 quadrennial assessment panel reports, setting out the synthesized key messages. The synthesis report will be made available to the parties prior to the forty-fifth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group.

38. Subsequently, the Secretariat participated in the 2023 meeting of the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel held from 24 to 28 April 2023 in London to finalize the Panel's reports that are due for consideration by the Working Group at its forty-fifth meeting.

I. Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention and eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention

39. The Ozone Secretariat participated in an online side event that took place on 7 May 2023 in the margins of the conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions held from 1 to 12 May 2023 in Geneva. The event, organized by the Partnership for Action on Challenges relating to E-waste (PACE II), focused on challenges and opportunities related to the environmentally sound management of used and waste refrigerators and cooling and heating equipment.

J. Network meetings in which the Secretariat participated

40. In the period between January and June 2023, representatives of the Secretariat participated in the following network meetings:

(a) Parallel Network Meeting of the Southeast Asia National Ozone Officers and Green Customs Workshop, back-to-back with the National Ozone Units and Customs Officers Twinning Workshop on ODS/HFC Trade Control and Reporting, Ha Long City, Viet Nam, 13–17 March 2023;

(b) Joint Network Meeting of National Ozone Officers of Latin America and the Caribbean countries, on implementation of and compliance with the Montreal Protocol, Panama City, 20–25 March 2023;

(c) Network Meeting of National Ozone Officers of Pacific Island Countries. Vanuatu, 8 May 2023 (virtual presentation);

(d) South Africa National Ozone Unit/UNIDO Workshop held in Johannesburg and Cape Town, 27–31 March 2023;

(e) Meeting of the Montreal Protocol Network for Europe and Central Asia (ECA network), on Strengthening RAC associations to support the HFC Phasedown under the Kigali Amendment, held in Ohrid, North Macedonia, 26–28 April 2023;

(f) Regional Network Meeting for National Ozone Officers of the English-speaking African Countries, back-to-back with the Thematic Workshop for Customs Officers, Kigali, 8–12 May 2023.