



For Immediate Release

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USA honors climate achievements of the Montreal Protocol

USEPA Climate Protection Awards recognize successful environmental treaty

Washington D.C., 21 April 2009 – The United States Environmental Protection Agency has recognized the extraordinary climate benefits achieved by the successful implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

The prestigious US EPA's Climate Protection awards are being presented today in Washington D.C. to individuals and organizations for their extraordinary and dedicated work in climate protection – a number of which are receiving awards for their work in deriving climate benefits from ozone layer protection activities under the Montreal Protocol.

Award winners include managers and staff of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) involved in treaty-related compliance and clearinghouse services for developing countries. Rajendra Shende, who heads the UNEP DTIE OzonAction Branch earned his award for helping 145 developing countries through networking activities to comply with the Montreal Protocol. USEPA praised Mr. Shende's longstanding efforts through UNEP's programme to advocate the deployment of policies that simultaneously protect the ozone layer and reduce climate change and the technologies that use low- or no-GWP refrigerants and improve energy efficiency in refrigeration and air conditioning in buildings and in home appliances.

OzonAction's Samira De Gobert earned her award by demonstrating exceptional skills in conceiving and implementing Ozone Layer Protection Communication Strategies among large and small developing countries on Ozone Layer Protection through innovative use of electronic media.

Mr. Shende became the second expert from UNEP to win a Climate Protection award from USEPA. Mr. Marco Gonzales, Executive Secretary of the Ozone Secretariat won the first award in 2008 for his leadership in facilitating the historic agreement accelerating the HCFC phase-out in 2007.

Mrs. De Gobert became the third expert from UNEP to win a Stratospheric Ozone Protection award from USEPA. Atul Bagai and James Curlin, respectively UNEP's Regional Officer for Asia and the Pacific and UNEP DTIE, both won awards for their work related to helping developing countries achieve and sustain compliance with the Montreal Protocol.

“The Montreal Protocol is the world’s best environment treaty, having phased out nearly one hundred ozone-damaging chemicals by 97%,” said Durwood Zaelke, President of the Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development. “At the same time, it has made a major contribution to climate protection, as the same ozone-destroying gasses also are climate-warming gasses. Much of the Montreal Protocol’s success goes to UNEP, which has brilliantly managed the twin challenges to the ozone layer and the climate system. The Planet owes them a great debt of gratitude.”

These awards demonstrate how much the World values UNEP’s efforts to provide policymakers and the business community with the scientific and technological base for sound decision making.

“These awards to Rajendra Shende and Samira De Gobert are sending strong messages that the developing and developed world stand to benefit much more by strategic implementation of the HCFC (hydrochlorofluorocarbons) phaseout,” said Dr. Stephen O. Andersen, Director, Strategic Climate Projects of USEPA. “With the help of UNEP, companies will want to avoid the choice of high-GWP HFCs that are controlled by the Kyoto Protocol.”

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Note to press:

1. The Montreal Protocol is recognized as the most successful international environmental treaty by any standard. What is less known is the fact that the Montreal Protocol has also provided substantial global warming reduction benefits because ozone depleting chemicals like CFCs and HCFCs are also greenhouse gases..
2. The world wide efforts to protect the stratospheric ozone layer were formalized through an international treaty agreed in 1987 by signing of the Montreal Protocol on the Substances that Deplete the Ozone layer. The treaty is bearing fruits. Scientists report that the chemicals that have been destroying the ozone layer are now "at or near peak," and could begin to dissipate slowly -- if nations stay the course. The participation in the efforts is near universal-today there are 191 countries out of 193 have ratified the Protocol.
3. A record-breaking funding mechanism known as the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol assists developing countries on this single global environmental issue and has been working effectively for the last 18 years. Through the Fund, more than US\$2.5 billion have been disbursed to 147 developing countries to enable them to comply with the Montreal Protocol. Another US\$ 200 million have been allotted by the Global Environmental Facility to Countries with Economies in Transition to achieve the Protocol targets.
4. The Protocol has resulted in significant net benefits for human health, fisheries, and agriculture and building materials. Technological innovation driven by the Protocol is creating additional economic and environmental benefits. By implementing this treaty alone, the world is avoiding 1.5 million cases of skin cancer, 330,000 deaths due to skin cancer and 129 million cases of cataracts. Benefits to agricultural production are estimated to be about US\$ 190 billion by 2060. Total global economic benefits are estimated to be US\$ 459 billion as compared to the

cost of implementation of US\$ 235 billion – a significant net economic benefit.

5. Recent study has shown that the Protocol has also resulted in extraordinary climate benefits. As ozone-depleting substances are also powerful greenhouse gases, their elimination has delayed the adverse impacts of climate change by nearly 12 years.

6. THE DUAL BENEFITS OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL

Over the last 20 years, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer has eliminated the production and consumption of more than **95%** of the historic levels of ozone-depleting substances. Many ozone-depleting substances are potent greenhouse gases; thus, the implementation of the Montreal Protocol is reducing greenhouse gas emissions by an estimated **11 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO₂)-equivalent** per year between 1990 and 2010 for a total net reduction of 135 billion tonnes. As a result, the climate benefits achieved by the Montreal Protocol are five to six times greater than the current reduction target (2008-2012) of the Kyoto Protocol - assuming full compliance with that agreement.

Parties to the Montreal Protocol have recently embraced their role in combating climate change. Their efforts began in September 2007, when the Parties agreed to **accelerate the phase-out of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs)** while keeping in mind energy efficiency and climate change objectives. In November 2008 the Parties continued their climate efforts by:

- providing U.S. \$490 million over three years to assist developing countries meet their mandatory commitments to phase out of HCFCs to protect the ozone layer and the climate system;
- launching pilot projects to **collect and destroy stockpiles** of unwanted chemicals that leak into the atmosphere and contribute to ozone depletion and climate change, with the goal of preventing the 6 billion tonnes of CO₂-eq. that otherwise will be emitted from these sources by 2015; and
- opening discussions on ways to support reductions in **hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)**, a class of chemicals currently controlled under the Kyoto Protocol.

7. CLIMATE BENEFITS OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL

The substantial climate benefits of the Montreal Protocol have resulted in the international community recognizing that an effective climate change mitigation strategy must look beyond CO₂. The Parties to the Montreal Protocol have recently enhanced their focus on the climate mitigation potential of this treaty while continuing to recognize that more needs to be done to repair the ozone layer.

Phase-out of HCFCs

The U.S. EPA estimates that, through 2040, the HCFC agreement could reduce emissions by up to 16 billion metric tonnes of CO₂-equivalent depending on the success of governments encouraging new ozone and climate-friendly alternatives. Annually, the accelerated phase-out of HCFCs could result in a reduction of more than 3.5% of all the world's current greenhouse gas emissions.

Energy Efficiency

In the process of converting from ozone-depleting substances, the energy efficiency of refrigeration and air conditioning applications has improved. For example, chillers today use 65% less energy than in the 1970s. Clearly, this provides significant climate benefits due to a decrease in emissions from fossil fuel use. In fact, many world leaders have recognized that improving energy efficiency is the fastest, most sustainable and cheapest way to reduce climate emissions.

Collecting and Destroying Substances from Stockpiles and Discarded Equipment

Destroying ozone-depleting substances from stockpiles and from discarded products and equipment that are accessible could speed recovery of the ozone layer by up to two years, and avoid up to six billion tonnes or more of CO₂-equivalent in climate emissions.

8. The OzonAction Programme of UNEP was launched in 1991, in UNEP DTIE's Paris office with the overall objective of enabling compliance by developing countries with the Montreal Protocol. With just a handful of staff in the beginning, this integrated capacity building programme evolved as it responded to the emerging needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition. It was strategically reoriented and regionalized in 2001 as the Compliance Assistance Programme. Since then, it has grown into a multi-location global service provider supported by about 50 expert staff in UNEP's 5 Regional Offices and one partner organization, i.e. SPREP (South Pacific Regional Environment Programme). For more information see: www.uneptie.org/ozonaction

9. As one of the four implementing agencies of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, along with UNDP, UNIDO and the World Bank, UNEP provides capacity building services that assist developing countries and Countries with Economies in Transition (CEITs) to achieve compliance with this MEA. Under approach, international assistance is focused on strengthening national capacity to meet compliance targets of the Montreal Protocol.

10. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established this global awards program in 1990 to recognize exceptional leadership, personal dedication, and technical achievements in eliminating ozone-depleting substances and reducing green house gases.. The Stratospheric Ozone Protection Award has been presented to 554 individuals and organizations from 46 countries and the Climate Protection Award has been presented to 169 individuals and organizations from 20 countries, so far. Originality and public purpose, persuasive moral and/or organizational leadership are some of the tough criteria used by past winners and other ozone experts, who make recommendations to EPA. EPA makes the final selections of award winners.

More information about past winner accomplishments is available online at:
www.epa.gov/cppd/climateawards.