



# Protecting the ozone layer

## A regional strategy to implement the Montreal Protocol in the Pacific region

### Factsheet

## Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

### Regional Strategy

The regional strategy to implement the Montreal Protocol is a commitment by eight Pacific countries to phase out the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) by 2005. CFCs play a major role in the destruction of the ozone layer and are controlled by the Montreal Protocol.

The regional strategy was developed by Pacific Island countries in collaboration with SPREP and UNEP. Preliminary work was successful in raising awareness of the Protocol at both national and regional levels. Each country is committed to implementing the key elements of National Compliance Action Plans (NCAPs) which include:

- Establishment of a national ozone office and committee
- Public awareness and education
- Establishment of licensing and monitoring systems
- Training of trainers and technicians on good practices in refrigeration
- Training of customs officials on monitoring and control of ODS imports
- Consideration of tax incentives to promote use of substitutes and alternative technologies

### The ozone layer

The "ozone layer", is located 10-50 km above the Earth and plays a vital role in absorbing harmful ultraviolet-B (UV-B) radiation from the sun. Increased exposure to UV-B radiation raises the risk of developing certain types of skin cancers. UV-B radiation also affects terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, altering growth, food chains and biochemical cycles. In particular, UV-B damages the aquatic life living just below the surface of salt and fresh water. These organisms are the basis of the Earth's food chain.

### The Montreal Protocol

The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer is considered the most successful environment agreement in existence, having reduced CFC use by 80% since 1989. The Protocol obligates the Party countries to phase out, within a stipulated time schedule, their use of ozone depleting substances (ODS) that are harmful to human and animal life.

The destruction of the ozone layer is largely attributed to the use of CFCs. Many CFCs in the Pacific are found in refrigerators and airconditioning units.



The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) is an intergovernmental organisation that works to protect and improve the Pacific islands' environment, and promote sustainable development and cooperation.

SPREP is based in Apia, Samoa.

## Pacific commitment

Funded by the Protocol's Multilateral Fund, the Regional Strategy includes eight countries (Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu). Fiji, Papua New Guinea, and Samoa are funded under separate arrangements. Funding for the Cook Islands, Nauru, and Niue is currently being sought.

Countries under the Regional Strategy are committed to the early phase-out of CFCs by 2005, which is well in advance of their obligations under the Protocol. Most suppliers have already phased out their consumption of CFCs so supply to these countries would be increasingly scarce, other than from illegal supplies.

## Success stories



*Participants at one of the workshops*

In 2003 and 2004, SPREP ran train-the-trainer workshops in eight Pacific countries in collaboration with UNEP and the Australian government.

The workshops included lectures on the harmful effects of ozone layer depletion, the Montreal Protocol, retrofitting, and future developments in refrigeration. In total, 129 people were trained in "good practices" using CFCs and alternative refrigerants in the eight countries. The long-term impact will be to enhance good service and technical practices in the refrigeration sector.

In a parallel programme, Fiji, PNG, and Samoa also ran train-the-trainer workshops. Resources were drawn locally and internationally. The workshops were on "good practices in refrigeration" and "controlling the imports of CFCs and other ODS" designed for customs officials.

The workshops trained 41 refrigeration technicians and 44 customs officers to train others to recognize and detect illegal imports of ozone-depleting substances and equipment containing such substances. In Samoa, the participants went on to train another 17 officers. The Fijian participants expected to go ahead and train over 370 customs officers in 2003. Both countries are also including a Montreal Protocol-related training module in the training curricula of new customs officers, thus gradually extending the impact of the initiative throughout the customs services.

The approach has been very successful in changing the behaviour of people using and controlling the gases. Overall, the approach has been helpful in assisting the countries to comply with the phase-out schedule for CFCs under the Regional Strategy and under separate arrangements.

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