

GES Message for the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer 2025

The UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 49/114 on 23 January 1995, which proclaims **16th September as the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer**. The main objective of the International Day is to commemorate the signing of the Montreal Protocol on the Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, which was signed on 16th September 1987.

The International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer is celebrated worldwide and this day serves as a reminder of our collective responsibility to protect and restore the ozone layer, a vital shield that safeguards life on Earth. The theme for this year is ‘**From Science to Global Action**’. This message highlights the crucial role of science in understanding the problem of ozone depletion. It also emphasizes the successful international response, including the adoption of the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol, which phased out ozone-depleting substances.

Mauritius became Party to the Montreal Protocol in 1992, and since then, in line with the requirement of the Protocol, has successfully phased out Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) which are substances known as Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) that harm the ozone layer. These ODS, commonly found in air conditioners, refrigerators, aerosols and fire extinguishers, pose a significant threat to the ozone layer, which is our planet's natural sunscreen, shielding us from the harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays of the sun.

Without it, life on Earth as we know would be severely compromised. Increased UV exposure can lead to a rise in skin cancer cases, cataracts, and other health problems. Moreover, the environment would suffer, with consequences such as disruptions in ecosystems, damage to crops and harm to marine life. In addition to having high Ozone Depleting Potential, these substances also have High Global Potential and contribute significantly to Climate Change.

As a replacement of CFCs and HCFCs, the use of Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) has increased over the past few years. It is to be recalled that HFCs are not Ozone Depleting Substances, but have high Global Warming Potential. In this line, the Kigali Amendment (KA) was adopted by the international community under the Montreal Protocol to phase down Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) consumption by eighty percent (80%) by 1st January 2045 in different stages.

Mauritius ratified the Kigali Amendment in October 2019 and in line with the requirement as a Party to the Kigali Amendment, Mauritius has already prepared a HFCs phase down plan, called the Kigali Implementation Plan (KIP). The stage 1 of KIP, which is from 2025 to 2029, has been approved by the Multilateral Fund. The objective is to achieve a reduction of 10 % of the country's baseline (average HFC consumption for year 2020-2022) of the HFC consumption of Mauritius by 2029.

Today, we have the power to make informed choices. Ozone and climate-friendly air conditioning units and refrigerators are readily available on the local market. By adopting these

eco-friendly alternatives, we can actively participate in the battle against ODS and climate change.

This year, to mark the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer, a series of activities will be held during the period September 2025 to March 2026, as follows –

- (i) As main activity, a one-day Workshop with importers/servicing and maintenance companies of Refrigeration and Air Conditioning equipment and refrigerants on Tuesday 16 September 2025;
- (ii) Radio Quiz with short messages on Ozone Layer Protection during the week of 15-19 September 2025 on 5 radio channels namely: Radio Plus, Radio One, Best FM, Waaza Fm and Top FM.;
- (iii) Radio Talks in Bhojpuri and creole on Ozone layer protection during the week 15-19 September 2025;
- (iv) An Open Day at Université des Mascareignes (UDM), Camp Le Vieux with the aim of promoting climate-friendly technology in the refrigeration and air-conditioning in natural refrigerants (hydrocarbons, carbon dioxide and ammonia) technologies by showcasing achievements through exhibits by Université des Mascareignes, Mauritius Institute of Training and Development and private companies;
- (v) Customs training on monitoring and prevention of illegal trade of substances controlled under the Montreal Protocol;
- (vi) A live painting competition for children/ exhibits on evolution of ozone hole after 40 years;
- (vii) A Roundtable discussion with the Private Sector through Business Mauritius involving high level management of companies in the Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning sector at Business Mauritius to sensitise on the Kigali Implementation Plan (an amendment to the Montreal Protocol) and showcase best practices; and
- (viii) Sensitisation on billboards for awareness on domestic R 290 Air conditioners (AC) – climate friendly market penetration.

We invite all of you to join hands with the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management, and Climate Change in our commitment to protect the ozone layer and our environment.