

## **World Ozone Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer**

Today, 16 September, the world is celebrating the World Ozone Day 2022. This year we celebrate 35 years of the Montreal Protocol. The theme for this year's celebration, '*Montreal Protocol@35: global cooperation protecting life on earth*', has been retained to acknowledge the importance of multilateralism and effective international cooperation in addressing the depletion of the ozone layer implying that human life and vital ecosystems will be able to survive and thrive while shielded from harmful UV radiation. Ozone layer protection also contributed to slow climate change: if ozone-depleting chemicals had not been banned, we would be looking at a global temperature rise of an additional 2.5°C by the end of this century. This would have been a catastrophe.

The ozone layer is in fact a region of the earth's atmosphere known as the stratosphere, that absorbs most of the sun's ultraviolet radiation, which otherwise would have had a detrimental effect on the health of living things of the planet in particular humans and plants. Without the ozone layer, it would be nearly impossible for anything to survive on the planet.

Trade in ozone depleting substances is regulated under the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol. Ozone depleting substances are substances used as refrigerants in air conditioners, refrigerators, aerosols, fire extinguishers etc. Examples of Ozone Depleting Substances include Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), Halons, Carbon tetrachloride, Methyl bromide, Carbon tetrachloride and Methyl chloroform.

Mauritius joined the Montreal Protocol in 1992 and has since then, complied with all of its provisions. After successful banning of CFCs in 2005 (five years ahead of the schedule for developing countries), Mauritius embarked in 2011 on the implementation of the Hydrochlorofluorocarbons Phase out Management Plan. The objective is to phase out import and use of Hydrochlorofluorocarbons by 2025, again five years ahead of the date scheduled for developing countries. However, the interim alternatives to CFCs and HCFCs, mainly the use of Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) have proved to be potent greenhouse gases. Studies have shown that the increasing trend in the use of HFCs could rise by 30% by 2030. It is projected that, by reducing the use of HFCs, a global temperature rise of 0.4° C could be avoided. Along this line, the Montreal Protocol has been accordingly amended to phasedown the use of HFCs through the Kigali Amendment which was adopted in 2016.

Mauritius has ratified the Kigali Amendment on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019. It has started its implementation namely through awareness raising campaigns and training of technicians in the refrigeration and air conditioning sector on natural refrigerants. A Hydrofluorocarbons Phase down Management Plan will be prepared and will include mainly technology transfer to both ozone and climate friendly technologies. Under the Kigali Amendment, Mauritius, being a developing country, will be required to freeze the import of HFCs as from 2024.

In Mauritius, HCFCs and HFCs are used mainly in the refrigeration and air-conditioning sector at both domestic and industrial levels. These include ozone and climate friendly refrigerators which are already available on the local market. The public in general are encouraged to use

ozone and climate friendly appliances and help protect the ozone layer as well as contribute in the reduction of green-house gases emission. We wish you all a happy International Ozone Day.