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Yemen celebrates International Ozone Day with new stage of Methyl Bromide soil fumigation alternatives

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Written By: **Observer Staff**

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As with many countries around the world, Yemen celebrates International Ozone Day on September 16 every year; and for this occasion Mr. Faisal Gaber, director of the National Ozone Unite- of Environment Protection Authority, has announced the second stage of training the professional farmers in two of the methyl bromide soil fumigation alternatives: Solar fumigation and Biofumigation. Their training is being held in Sa'dah governorate this month.

National Ozone Unite in collaboration with German Technical Cooperation, PROKLIMA\ GTZ, prepared a Phase-out Program for Methyl Bromide uses in soil fumigation since 2005, considering that 10 Kilograms of this substance contribute in depletion of six Kilograms of the Ozone Layer. The main goal of the programme is to reduce the uses of Methyl Bromide in soil fumigation from 36 ODP tone in 2007 to 20 ODP tone in 2010 and to zero in 2015.

In the first stage of training research, three farmers experienced the alternatives. This time it is with ten new farmers. The third stage of training research will be to announce for the alternatives that are being applied in some areas in Saa'dah and the alternatives are expected to be a great success. "The program aims at assisting the local farmers to address the new Methyl Bromide alternatives which will be achieved by selecting technologies that are suitable to the nature and climate of Yemen," Gaber said. "There also needs to be training of the farmers and agricultural engineers in the region on such technologies and they can consequently be selected by the best to be disseminated through professional farmer networks who are selected from other professionals," he said.

In Yemen, the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer is celebrated annually. However, the association is being held all around the world, as the theme for this 2008-year is 'Montreal Protocol - Global Partnership for Global Benefits'.

"Market turmoil, economic downturns and talk of recession have historically spelt tough times for the environment. At such moments, safeguarding the planet has often been a luxury and a burden on economic recovery and development. But the remarkable story of the ozone layer, whose preservation we celebrate today, shows such thinking for what it is: mere myth," said UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his message for the International Ozone Day.

"After decades of chemical attacks, it may take another 50 years or so for the ozone layer to recover fully. As the Montreal Protocol has taught us, when we degrade our environment too far,

nursing it back to health tends to be a long journey, not a quick fix. But the overarching lesson of the Protocol is that by acting on one challenge, we also act on many others. Continued progress, and the possibility of new breakthroughs from Copenhagen and others would also make significant contributions to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. On this International Day, let us pledge to seize more such multi-faceted opportunities, and do our utmost to create tomorrow's "green economy" today."

On December 19, 1994, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 16 September the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer, commemorating the date in 1987, on which the Montreal Protocol on Substances that deplete the Ozone Layer was signed.

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