

**UNEP DTIE OzonAction Programme under the Multilateral Fund****Global Efforts to Protect Ozone Layer Get Major Boost - Donors Commit Funds to Close Russia's CFC Factories**

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NAIROBI, 8 October 1998 - The efforts to protect the ozone layer received a major boost yesterday when ten donor countries, meeting in Moscow, committed US\$ 19 million to assist in the closure of the Russian Federation's production facilities for chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and halons by the year 2000. The funds, the result of a special initiative from The World Bank, will be used to compensate the producers of these ozone-depleting substances (ODS) and will supplement \$US 10 million from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), which has been made available to assist Russia in meeting its obligations under the Montreal Protocol.

Congratulating the Russian Federation, The World Bank and GEF for making the closure of CFC production facilities a time-bound and practical proposition, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Executive Director, Klaus Toepfer, said, "This measure will phase-out half of the production capacity for CFCs and Halons in the world. I applaud this initiative and look forward to full implementation of the Montreal Protocol".

The desire of the world community to protect the ozone layer has been catalyzed and channeled by UNEP into two legal agreements - the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. These agreements aim to protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production and consumption of ODS such as CFCs throughout the world.

Implementation of the Montreal Protocol by all countries is a necessary precondition for the recovery of the ozone layer and the burden of responsibility is now on the developing countries and the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation today produces about 9 percent of the world production of CFCs and consumes about 6.5 percent. More importantly, the production capacity is almost half of the world capacity now. Russia was to have phased out its production and consumption of ODS by the end of 1996. However, its political and economic transition delayed the phase out and Russia sought the help of the international community.

The GEF (administered by UNEP, The World Bank and the UN Development Programme) has sanctioned US\$ 60 millions to change the technologies of the consumer industry in Russia to ozone friendly substitutes. The closure of the production sector was considered essential to stop the flow of CFCs to the industrialized countries - the so called "CFC smuggling".

"The closure of the production facilities should result in complete compliance with the Montreal Protocol, not only in the Russian Federation, but also in many other countries which get supplies from Russia", said Toepfer. "This funding news is perfect timing coming just six weeks before the Meeting of the Parties in Cairo. On behalf of UNEP and the world community, I thank the donors - Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, Sweden, UK and USA - for their special contribution to this important project", he said.

The donor's roundtable meeting on the Special Initiative for Ozone Depleting Substances Production Closure in the Russian Federation was held in Moscow from 6 to 7 October. Russia also committed itself to phase out the production and consumption of carbon tetrachloride and methyl chloroform by 2000 and to observe the controls on HCFCs and Methyl Bromide.

The Tenth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol will meet in Cairo, Egypt from 17-24 November, 1998.

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