

OZONE DEPLETION

THE EARTH'S OZONE LAYER HAS BEEN DEPLETING SINCE THE 1970S. THE MAJOR CAUSE OF THIS DEPLETION WAS DUE TO THE USE OF CHLOROFLUOROCARBONS (CFCs) THROUGHOUT THE 20TH CENTURY, WHICH BREAK DOWN OZONE WHEN THEY ENTER THE ATMOSPHERE. ALTHOUGH THE 'HOLE IN THE OZONE LAYER' IS STARTING TO STABILISE AND SHRINK, THE EFFECTS OF THIS DEPLETION HAVE INCREASED.

Ozone Depletion allows more UV radiation to enter through the atmosphere, which has increased diseases caused by UV exposure:

- Skin cancer can be caused by UV exposure. 90% of all non-melanoma cases are associated with UV exposure; cases have increased in the 21st century
- Between 1992 - 2006, treatment of nonmelanoma skin cancers increased by nearly 77%. The incidence of squamous cell carcinoma increased 200% over the past three decades in the US.
- UV radiation is also thought to cause cataracts, and it is projected that cases of cataracts will continue to rise.

THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL

- largely successful
- 1987 experiment and satellite observations showed the depletion of the ozone layer which led to quick international action
- Companies came together to ban CFCs- listened to the advice of scientists; coordinated research led to international negotiations
- Climate projections indicate that the ozone layer will return to 1980 levels between 2050 and 2070. Due to its widespread adoption and implementation it has been hailed as an example of successful international co-operation, with Kofi Annan (7th Secretary-General of the UN) quoted as saying that "perhaps the single most successful international agreement to date has been the Montreal Protocol".
- The main objective of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol is to assist developing country parties whose annual per capita consumption and production of ozone depleting substances (ODS) is less than 0.3 kg to comply with the control measures of the Protocol. Currently, 147 of the 196 Parties to the Montreal Protocol meet these criteria (they are referred to as Article 5 countries).

