



II. UNEP'S WORK IN THE REGION



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Enforcing trade restrictions on ozone-depleting substances

The Montreal Protocol controls and reduces the production and consumption of ozone-depleting substances (ODS) according to a phase-out schedule for developing and developed country Parties. Since 2010, the production and consumption of virgin chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), halons and carbon tetrachloride (CTC) has been banned and trade in the remaining ODS, including hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and methyl bromide, is monitored and controlled by a national ODS import/ export licensing systems.

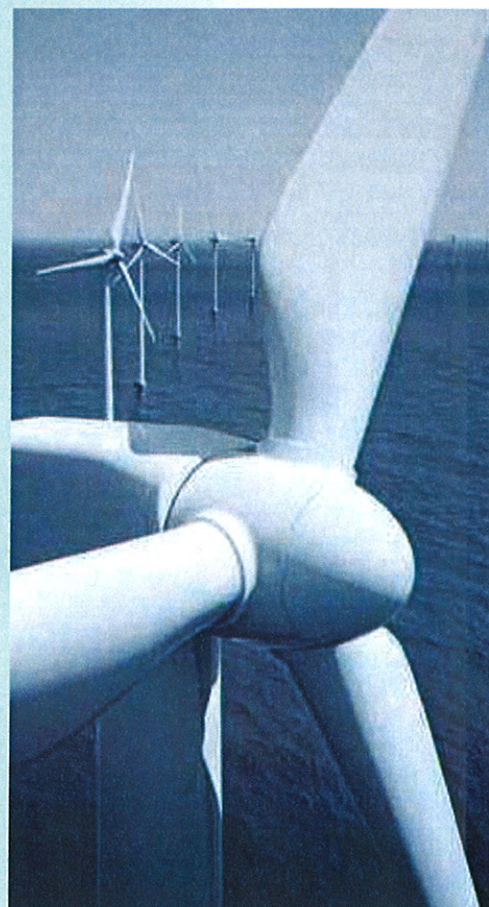
Given the international dimension of trade in such chemicals and the need for communication between importing and exporting countries, the UNEP DTIE OzonAction initiated the informal Prior Informed Consent (iPIC) system in the Asia Pacific region. This is a voluntary mechanism for importing and exporting countries responsible for issuing trade licenses to exchange information on intended trade in ODS. Increasingly, countries from Europe & Central Asia as well as Latin America & the Caribbean participate in the system and share information on their licensing systems, registered exporters and importers, quotas and bans through iPIC Information Sheets.

In Europe & Central Asia, the 27 member states of the European Union as well as Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan participate in the iPIC system. Thanks to such voluntary consultations, several cases of unwanted trade in ODS have already been prevented in 2011. Cases include the prevention of an intended shipment of 100 metric tonnes of HCFC-141b from China to Russia and a smaller shipment of carbon tetrachloride (CTC) from the European Union to Serbia.

As a parallel initiative in 2010, the World Customs Organization conducted the global operation Sky-Hole-Patching II to prevent illegal trade in ODS. This was supported by 26 countries from Europe and Central Asia (33% of total participating countries). Out of a total of 27 seizures globally (108 metric tonnes ODS and 668 pieces of equipment), 15 seizures (56% of total) took place in Europe and Central Asia. The most prominent seizure, 44 metric tonnes of HCFC, was reported by France.

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Briefing the French journalists on UNEP's key activities



On 10 March, a group of ten French journalists visited the International Environment House in Geneva to be briefed on UNEP's key activities. From the flagship projects run by the Regional Office for Europe to the newly launched Green Economy report or the latest developments and activities of CITES and the post-conflict team, the French press left Switzerland with a deeper understanding of our work and expressed their intention to visit again before Rio+20 next year. ROE plans to repeat this briefing experience with journalists from other major countries in the region.

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