



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE OZONE LAYER**

The search for the revival of ozone demands continued alertness

**Geneva 16 September 2004 (WMO) - According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the ozone layer protecting life on Earth from the harmful effects of ultra violet radiation continues to be depleted with the most pronounced depletion occurring in the Antarctic region. "Over the next fifteen years, high quality global observations of ozone and ozone-depleting substances would be particularly critical in verifying the effectiveness of the actions taken under the Vienna Convention in 1985, the Montreal Protocol of 1987 and its amendments", says Mr Michel Jarraud, the Secretary-General of WMO.**

Mr Jarraud emphasizes that: "As ozone-depleting substances reach a broad peak and begin to decline, the search for recovery of ozone requires vigilance. Global changes in climate mean that conditions in the atmosphere are different today from those that prevailed prior to periods marked by ozone depletion. The changes in conditions may indeed have implications for ozone recovery. Maintaining existing observational capabilities and enhancing the integration of information using numerical atmospheric prediction models is critical in separating the effects due to changes in climate from those due to changes in ozone-depleting substances".

Since the 1950s, routine ozone measurements in all parts of the world using surface-based spectrophotometers, balloon-borne sensors, aircraft and satellites have been made by WMO Members and partners worldwide. Comprehensive measurements have been coordinated by the WMO Global Atmosphere Watch (GAW) since the late 1980s. These measurements have been critical to the series of ozone science assessments published since the mid 1980s by WMO and the Ozone Secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme documenting progress made under the Vienna Convention.

In June 2004, WMO co-sponsored the Quadrennial Ozone Symposium in Kos, Greece, organized by the International Ozone Commission (IOC). 690 research papers were presented and in depth discussions took place on issues concerning the processes affecting ozone depletion, the effectiveness of controls and how to promote general awareness on this complex issue.

In a Summary Report<sup>1</sup>, the IOC described the three stages of ozone recovery. Stage 1 is a significant slowing in the downward trend of ozone. Stage 2 is a significant upward trend once influences such as the solar cycle and volcanoes have been removed. Stage 3 is when

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<sup>1</sup> WMO website: <http://www.wmo.int/web/arep/ozone.html>

ozone returns to pre-1980 levels in the stratosphere. Whether or not stage 1 has been reached, still remains a matter of intense analysis.

In early August, WMO/GAW began the release of its annual Ozone Bulletins on the current state of stratospheric ozone in Antarctica<sup>2</sup>, where the most regular and dramatic decreases in ozone occur. Traditionally, the Antarctic ozone hole reaches its maximum intensity in early October.

**The World Meteorological Organization is the United Nations System's  
*authoritative voice on Weather, Climate and Water***

**For more information please contact:**

- Ms. Carine Richard-Van Maele, Chief, Communications and Public Affairs, WMO. Tel: +41 (0) 22 730 8315, Fax: +41 (0) 22 730 8027. E-mail: [cvanmaele@wmo.int](mailto:cvanmaele@wmo.int)
- Mr Yunjie Zheng, Press Officer, Communications and Public Affairs, WMO. Tel: +41 (0) 22 730 8168. Fax: +41 (0) 22 730 8027. E-mail: [yzheng@wmo.int](mailto:yzheng@wmo.int), Website: <http://www.wmo.int>
- Leonard Barrie, Chief Environment Division, WMO. (E-mail: [lbarrie@wmo.int](mailto:lbarrie@wmo.int)) (tel: +41(0) 22 730 82 40).
- Prof. Christos Zerrefos, Secretary of the IOC. (E-mail: [zerefos@geol.uoa.gr](mailto:zerefos@geol.uoa.gr)).

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<sup>2</sup> Ozone Bulletins are posted on the WMO website:[http:// www.wmo.ch/web/arep/gaw/gaw\\_home.html](http://www.wmo.ch/web/arep/gaw/gaw_home.html)