

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

The following paragraphs briefly describe some of the recent developments in the area of the protection of the environment that have special importance for Canada.

Chlorofluorocarbon Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer

Following its ratification of the 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer on 4 June 1986, Canada participated actively in three United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Experts' Working Group sessions for the preparation of a control protocol on chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and other ozone modifying substances. In September 1987, in Montreal, Canada hosted the fourth session of the Experts' Working Group and a Diplomatic Conference convened for the purpose of concluding the protocol.

On 16 September, 1987 Canada, twenty-three other States and the European Economic Community signed the Protocol which provides for a fifty per cent reduction in consumption of CFCs by 1999 and a freeze on the consumption of certain other ozone-modifying substances, Halons, by 1993. In addition, the Protocol includes a provision exempting less developed countries from the controls for ten years and a ban on imports of the controlled substances from non-Parties that do not comply with its provisions.

The Protocol represents the first time that the international community has agreed to take effective action to combat a serious environmental concern before the worst effects of the problem have been felt. As such, it is a significant step forward both in terms of international environmental policy and international law.

The Protocol will enter into force after eleven states representing two-thirds of the 1986 global consumption of the controlled substances have ratified it. As of September 1988 five countries had ratified the Protocol: Canada, U.S.A., Mexico, Norway and Sweden.

Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) -- Draft Nitrogen Oxide (NOX) Protocol

In 1985, Canada and 20 other states signed a Protocol to the ECE Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution