

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

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

Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer

On 22 March 1985, the Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer was adopted at a diplomatic conference in Vienna. The Convention commits participating nations to protect human health and the environment against adverse effects resulting from modifications to the ozone layer. It also provides for international cooperation and research, monitoring, scientific assessment, and exchange of information on matters relating to the status of the ozone layer. In addition, the diplomatic conference requested the United Nations Environment Programme to continue work on a protocol to the Convention which would provide internationally agreed measures to control global production, emissions and use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

On 4 June 1986, Canada became the first nation to ratify the Convention. Since then, Canada has actively participated in two international workshops on CFCs and an international conference on the effects of changes in the stratosphere ozone and global climate. The purpose of these meetings was to prepare the groundwork for a diplomatic conference in 1987 when countries will attempt to finalize a protocol addressing the control of ozone-modifying substances. Canada has prepared a draft protocol for the consideration of interested parties prior to the diplomatic conference.

London Dumping Convention

Two issues of continuing importance at the London Dumping Convention (LDC) are the ocean dumping of low-level radioactive wastes and disposal into the sea-bed of high-level radioactive wastes.

In 1983, at the 7th Consultative Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the LDC, a resolution was adopted calling for a moratorium on the ocean dumping of low-level radioactive wastes, pending submission of a report on the scientific and technical considerations relevant to whether such dumping should be subject to an outright ban. Canada supported the resolution. Following the 8th Consultative Meeting (1984), a panel of independent experts was established to study the accumulated scientific and technical information.