

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. From 8-16 September 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, 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, which will enter into force after eleven states representing two-thirds of the 1986 global consumption of the controlled substances have ratified it, 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.

Environmental Impact Assessment

The Second Session of a Working Group of Experts on Environmental Law, established pursuant to a 1983 UNEP Governing Council Decision, met in Geneva in January 1987 to finalize and adopt "Goals and Principles on Environmental Impact Assessment". These Goals and Principles, approved by UNEP Governing Council in June 1987, represent the first