

## SUMMARY AND PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Life on Earth is shielded from damaging ultraviolet radiation by the ozone layer, yet we are threatening that layer's very existence. If all CFCs dispersed in refrigeration systems throughout the world were released, the ozone layer would probably be destroyed. Moreover, CFCs contribute to global warming, each molecule having up to 20,000 times the greenhouse effect of carbon dioxide. The time to remove the threat that CFCs pose to our atmosphere is now. This report recommends a strategy for eliminating these substances from our environment.

Three issues need to be resolved. First, we must phase out the production and use of CFCs and related substances that are damaging the atmosphere. Second, we must develop and market the least harmful substitutes. Third, we must ensure that those chemicals now in use are recovered, recycled and eventually destroyed—they must not be allowed to escape into the atmosphere. This must be accomplished globally.

### *Control and Elimination*

Provisions for controlling certain CFCs and halons are contained in the Montreal Protocol of 1987. Although this international agreement would result in a 50% reduction in the production<sup>(1)</sup> and consumption<sup>(2)</sup> of CFCs in the signatory countries by 1998, it has become clear that this is not sufficient to stop depletion of the ozone layer. The Protocol must be strengthened at the June 1990 meeting in London by accelerating the phaseout of those CFCs and halons already covered, by including other ozone-depleting substances and by bringing other countries, particularly developing countries, into the Protocol.

Our first two recommendations call on the federal government to take a strong stand, both at home and at the international negotiating table, for more rapid phaseout of CFCs (used predominantly in refrigeration), halons (used in fire extinguishers) and the chlorinated solvents carbon tetrachloride and methyl chloroform (used primarily as cleaning agents).

- 
1. As defined in the Protocol, "production" means the amount of controlled substances produced minus the amount destroyed by technologies to be approved by the Parties.
  2. As defined in the Protocol, "consumption" means production plus imports minus exports of controlled substances.