

EU on track to end use of chemicals harming the ozone layer



The EEA's [annual report on ozone-depleting substances](#) confirms that the EU keeps contributing to the global phase-out of chemicals harming the ozone layer, in line with its commitments under the Montreal Protocol. Ozone-depleting substances (ODS) are widely used in refrigerants, polymers, pharmaceuticals and agricultural chemicals.

The new EEA report shows that the consumption of ozone-depleting substances in the EU in 2018 remained negative (-1 505 tonnes), which means that more of these substances were destroyed or exported than produced or imported. The EU's consumption of these substances has been negative since 2010 with the exception of 2012.

The results reflect the successful implementation of the EU's '[ODS Regulation](#)' (EC) No 1005/2009, which goes further than the Montreal Protocol, in combination with high destruction rates and decreasing stocks.

The EEA report is published on the [International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer](#), which is marked every year on 16 September.

Background

In 1989, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer entered into force. Its objective is to protect the stratospheric ozone layer by phasing out the production of ozone-depleting substances (ODS). The protocol covers over 200 individual substances with a high ozone-depleting potential (ODP), including chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), halons, carbon tetrachloride (CTC), 1,1,1-Trichloroethane (TCA), hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), hydrobromofluorocarbons (HBFCs), bromochloromethane (BCM) and methyl bromide (MB), all of which are referred to as 'controlled substances'.

The Montreal Protocol was amended in October 2016, in Kigali, Rwanda, to regulate hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). Used as substitutes to CFCs, HFCs are potent greenhouse gases and their production and consumption has grown significantly over the last decades. Both developed and developing countries have taken on mandatory commitments to reduce production and consumption of HFCs in the next three decades.

Stopping the use of ozone-depleting substances is crucial to protecting the ozone layer in the Earth's atmosphere. The ozone layer serves an important function in protecting life on Earth as it absorbs the sun's ultraviolet rays, which can pose a danger to the environment and human health.