ALBANIAN GREEN ACADEMY

European Green Deal
Climate Change

GREEN EUROPEAN FOUNDATION

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The Green European Foundation (GEF) is a European-level political foundation whose mission is to contribute to a lively European sphere of debate and to foster greater involvement by citizens in European politics. GEF strives to mainstream discussions on European policies and politics both within and beyond the Green political family. The foundation acts as a laboratory for new ideas, offers cross-border political education and a platform for cooperation and exchange at the European level.

The Albanian Green Institute was founded in 2009 with the objective promoting green thinking and acting in all political, economic, social and environmental aspects. Part of the mission is also the greater commitment of civic society and citizens to the development of democracy in the country and the implementation of green policies as well.

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This report was prepared based on the trainings, workshops and lectures organized at the Albanian Green Academy in 2021. The overarching themes of the events focused on the European Green Deal and Climate Justice at local, national and European levels. The aim of the report is to promote green thinking in political, social and environmental aspects in Albanian and the region.

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INTRODUCTION

“Albanian Green Academy 2021” was held on 10-12th September and 1-3rdOctober. It was divided in two phases. The main theme and focus of this first phase of the academy was "European Green Deal". The main theme and focus of this second phase of the academy was "Climate Change".

In this series of 6-day training the topics of European Green Deal and Climate Change were addressed in the context national and European conditions. A very important objective of this project was to bring together, equip with information and build cooperation between different groups for an environmental society.

Session one: European Green Deal

General Introduction

The European Green Deal is a guide to make the EU economy sustainable by turning climate and environmental challenges into opportunities in all policy areas. It aims to promote efficient use of resources by moving to a clean and circulating economy, to stop climate change, biodiversity loss and to reduce pollution. Introduced in December 2019, the main objective of the Green Deal is for the EU to become the first continent neutral to climate by 2050, resulting in a cleaner environment, more affordable energy, smarter transportation, new jobs and a better quality of life in general. It describes the necessary investments and available financing tools, and explains how to ensure a smooth and comprehensive transition. The European Green Deal covers all sectors of economy, especially transport, energy, agriculture, buildings and industries such as steel, cement, ICT, textiles and chemicals. The New Green Deal is the integrated policy approach to Greens in Europe are posing as a solution to the crisis.

It has 3 main pillars:

1. Addressing the climate crisis and toxic pollution
2. Creating good, high-paying jobs
3. Fighting racial, economic and gender inequality

The main objectives of the Green New Deal

1. Climate / Pollution:
- Zero net greenhouse gas emissions.
- “A fair and equitable transition for all communities and workers ”-“ clean air and water, sustainability (adaptation to) climate change and community, healthy eating, sustainable environment ”- for everyone.

2. Employment:
- "Millions of good jobs with high salaries"
- “prosperity and financial security for all

3. Equality:
- “Preventing, stopping and repairing the historical oppression of people indigenous, colored communities, migrant communities, deindustrialized communities, rural communities of depopulated, poor, low-income workers, women, the elderly, the homeless, people with disabilities and Young people ".

Session one: European Green Deal

New Deal

- 100% clean energy.
- Infrastructure renovation.
- Reducing climate impacts.
- Provision of clean water.
- Expansion of clean transport.
- Reconceptualization with innovative buildings.
- Massive increase of clean technology in production.
- Rehabilitation of ecosystems and cleaning of hazardous waste.

Financing of the EU Green Deal

The proposed financing of the EU Green Deal is set out in the Investment Plan. It includes two main funding streams with a total of € 1 trillion. Over half of the budget, 528 billion euros, will come directly from the EU budget and the Trading System of EU Emissions. The rest will be provided by the InvestEU program, which combines 279 billion euros from the public and private sectors by 2030 and 114 billion euros from national co-financing. The European Innovation Council has also set a budget of € 300 million to invest in market-creating innovations that contribute to the goals of the EU Green Deal.

The EU Green Deal recognizes that the transition can only succeed if it is carried out fairly and comprehensively. As a result, a fair transition mechanism is proposed that focuses exclusively on the regions and sectors that are most affected by the transition. It is based on the EU budget and in the InvestEU program to generate 100 billion euros in funding. This will be available for regions and sectors that depend on fossil fuels or carbon-intensive processes.

Climate action

Between 1990 and 2018, greenhouse gas emissions in the EU were reduced by 23 percent. A central objective of the EU Green Deal is to set the trajectory for the EU to be climate neutral by 2050. As a milestone towards this target, the EU Commission proposed a 2030 target to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by 55 percent compared to 1990. This target of 2030 is proposed to be reflected in the European Climate Law, which will also include in the legislation the target of climate neutrality of 2050 of the EU Green Deal.

European Climate Law requires that all EU policies contribute to achieving the objective of the EU Green Deal. As a result, the EU Commission is reviewing every EU law to ensure its compliance with EU emission reduction targets, under an exercise called the "Fit for 55 Package". This long process has already begun.

Session one: European Green Deal

Clean Energy

The production and use of energy in all economic sectors currently accounts for more than 75 per cent of EU greenhouse gas emissions. The Clean Energy policy area aims to reduce this figure by developing an energy sector based mainly on renewable sources and an integrated, interconnected and digitalized energy market in the EU.

The renewable energy strategy encourages the investment of almost 800 billion euros so far. The EU Hydrogen Strategy explores the potential of pure hydrogen to contribute to decarbonization. The adopted strategy promotes the innovation of pure hydrogen and the installation of hydrogen electrolyzers. The strategy includes a goal to install at least 6 GW of green hydrogen electrolyzers within the EU, producing up to 1 million tones of hydrogen by 2024. By 2030 the ambition is to install at least 40 GW of electrolyzers, producing up to 10 million tonnes of hydrogen in the EU.

The "Clean Energy for All Europeans" package will facilitate the energy system integration strategy, which aims to improve the coordination of the planning and operation of the energy system 'as a whole', between the multiple energy carriers, infrastructure and end uses. The EU institutions will discuss the strategy outlining a vision to create a smarter and more integrated energy system.

Together, these EU initiatives will work in synergy to lay the foundations for the EU 's decarbonized energy system.

Sustainable industry

Industry currently accounts for 20% of EU greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, the EU Green Deal includes actions to strengthen decarbonisation efforts, ranging from product sustainability to the supply of raw materials. The approved regional economy action plan is an initiative to increase the life of a product in order to alleviate the pressure on natural resources. It includes a consistent product policy, which governs improved product reuse, repairability, and integration of recycled content. The aim of the adopted EU Industrial Strategy is to develop markets for neutral and circular climate products and to encourage digital transition in the EU. The EU Green Deal notes that these measures are necessary to ensure the supply of critical raw materials needed for clean technologies such as clean hydrogen, fuel cells and other alternative fuels, energy conservation and capture, storage and utilization of carbon.

With regard to batteries, the European Commission proposal for durable batteries and a regulation on batteries and waste batteries aims to strengthen the sustainability of supply chains and improve the recycling of industrial batteries, automobiles, electric and portable batteries placed on the EU market. Proposals include enhanced recycling targets, carbon footprint reporting requirements, transition to carbon intensity restrictions, and proper supply chain care.

Buildings and renovations

Buildings are responsible for approximately 40 per cent of EU energy consumption and 36 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions from energy. The objectives of the EU Green Deal require cleaner buildings and construction sectors. Renovation Wave is a strategy to renovate buildings to increase their energy efficiency. It prioritizes decarbonization of heating and cooling, treating the stock of worst-performing buildings and renovating public buildings such as schools and hospitals. Energy efficiency in buildings will be a priority and the EU Commission will consider the possibility of including emissions from buildings in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS).

The EU Commission is also reviewing the Construction Products Regulation, which sets out the requirements for construction products in the internal market. A revised regulation has the potential to promote environmental goals and possibly product safety. In parallel, the EU Commission proposes to work on an open platform that brings together architects, engineers and local authorities to address barriers to renovation. It can target energy service companies that can renovate, e.g. through energy performance contracting. The reforms aim to optimize the development of innovative financing in the construction sector and the promotion of energy efficient investments in buildings.

Sustainable transport

The Sustainable Mobility policy area includes initiatives to reduce transport emissions, which account for 25 per cent of EU greenhouse gas emissions. The adopted Strategy for Sustainable and Smart Mobility lays the groundwork for action to transform the EU transport sector, with the aim of reducing emissions by 90 percent by 2050, provided by a smart transport system, competitive, secure, accessible and affordable. Capacity building and reducing overcrowding and pollution can all be achieved as a result of efforts to promote more sustainable means of transport.

The strategy sets a number of objectives by 2030, including:
·at least 30 million zero-emission cars will operate on European roads;
·100 European cities will be climate neutral;
·high-speed rail traffic will double across Europe;
·I Planned collective travel for trips under 500 km should be carbon neutral;
·automated mobility will be deployed on a large scale;
·Zero-emission shipping vessels will be ready for the market, with further targets by 2035 and 2040.

Elimination of pollution

Pollution is the biggest environmental cause of numerous mental and physical illnesses as well as premature deaths. It is also an important driver of biodiversity loss. Therefore, the EU Commission has proposed an action plan for zero pollution. This proposes that pollution elimination measures be included in all policy developments and that steps be taken to further separate economic growth from pollution growth. The action plan includes three main actions to eliminate pollution. First, a chemical sustainability strategy to protect the environment from hazardous chemicals. Second, a zero-pollution action plan for water, air and soil, to better prevent, correct, monitor and report pollution. Finally, review measures to address pollution from large industrial installations to ensure that they are in line with the objectives set out in the EU Green Deal. A revision of the Regulation on substances that deplete the ozone layer is also envisaged.

Biodiversity conservation

In the last 40 years, the population of wild species has declined by 60 percent due to human activities. The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 identifies key drivers for biodiversity loss such as land and sea use change, overexploitation, climate change, pollution and invasive alien species. Biodiversity loss and climate change are inextricably linked, and nature-based solutions will play an important role in mitigating and adapting to climate change. The European Commission identifies that the industries most dependent on biodiversity are the construction, agriculture and food and beverage sectors. The EU Biodiversity Strategy will work together with the Farm to Fork strategy focusing on restoring forests, lands and wetlands and creating green spaces in cities. To address legislative gaps that hinder the improvement of biodiversity standards across the EU, the EU will implement a new biodiversity governance framework. This framework includes setting legally binding nature restoration objectives to restore degraded ecosystems, which will be achieved by fully implementing the EU Pollutant Initiative and the Habitats Directive, as well as through the CAP.

The European Commission estimates that € 20 billion a year is needed to fund the biodiversity strategy. This will require the use of a combination of public and private funding at national and EU level, as well as from the EU budget. Part of the Renewed Sustainable Finance Strategy will focus on ensuring that the financial system contributes to mitigating existing and future biodiversity risks, recognizing the risk that biodiversity loss poses to the financial prospects of many sectors of the economy.

Research and development

Research and development supports every element of the EU Green Deal. Many of the EU Green Deal initiatives require the use of new technologies and the transformation of financial models and supply chains. Many research and development initiatives will be funded by Horizon Europe, which has pledged over 35 percent of its € 95.5 billion budget to meet the EU's climate targets. Under Horizon Europe, the EU will establish green partnerships with various industries and its member states to focus on key areas such as batteries, clean hydrogen, low carbon steel, built environment and biodiversity.

Preventing unfair competition from carbon leakage

The EU Green Deal will require a significant reorientation of the EU economy towards a low carbon model. This carries with it the risk of carbon leakage. The EU Commission has identified this as a risk that either production will be transferred from the EU to other countries with lower ambitions to reduce emissions, or that EU products will be replaced by more intensive carbon imports. Carbon leakage is currently controlled by the free distribution of permits under the EU ETS, or compensation for energy-intensive industries affected by higher electricity costs as a result of the carbon price under the EU ETS. Therefore, the EU Commission is proposing a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism to ensure that the price of imports more accurately reflects their carbon content. This measure is proposed to be drafted in accordance with the rules of the World Trade Organization and other international obligations of the EU.

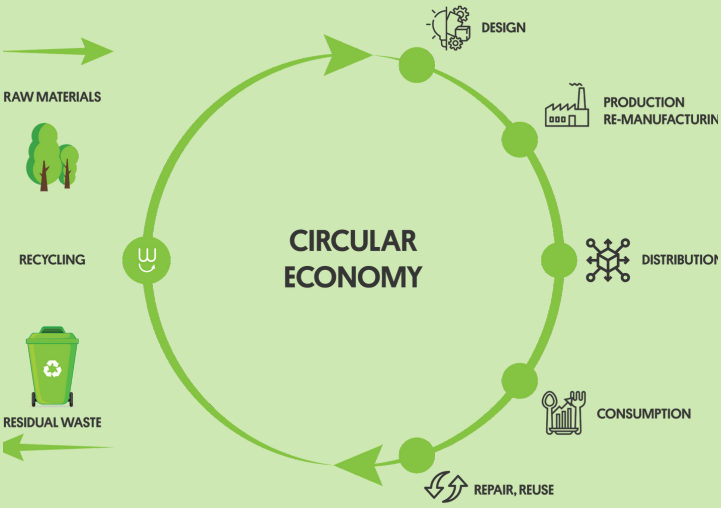
EU legislation – objectives

In line with the European Waste Directive, EU countries must take measures to meet the following objectives:

• By 2020: recycling minimum 50% by weight (paper, metal, plastic, glass)

• By 2020: reuse, recycling of other non-harmful materials (from construction, demolition of buildings, etc.), increase, minimum 70% by weight.

• By 2025: minimum reuse and recycling of urban waste to be: 55% (2025), 60% (2030), 65% (2035).



Circular economy

There is only one planet Earth, but by 2050, the world will be consumed as if there were three. Global consumption of materials such as biomass, fossil fuels, metals and minerals is expected to double in the next forty 2 years, while annual waste production is projected to increase by 70% by 2050. Circulating economy is a model of production and consumption, which includes sharing, renting, reusing, repairing, renovating, and recycling existing materials and products for as long as possible. This prolongs the life cycle of the products.

In practice, this means reducing waste to a minimum. When a product reaches the end of its life, its materials are kept within the economy wherever possible. These can be used productively again and again, thus creating further value.
This is a departure from the traditional, linear economic model, which is based on the take-do-consume-throw model. This model relies on large amounts of materials and cheap energy, easily accessible.

Green Jobs

According to the Bureau of Labour Statistics, there are two components to consider when defining green jobs. These components include:

- Positions in companies that create goods or offer services that benefit the environment or work to reduce the use of natural resources
- Jobs that involve duties that focus on helping their company's production processes more eco-friendly by using less natural resources

In short, green jobs are any positions that work to preserve or restore the quality of the environment. The most common green jobs are found in the manufacturing, R&D, agricultural and service industries and any other industry that typically uses large amounts of natural resources throughout its production of goods or services.
The primary characteristics of a green job include:

- Minimized contamination and waste
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Contribution to the adaption to climate change
- Protection and/or restoration of the various ecosystems
- Increased energy-efficient consumption of raw materials and energy

Green jobs are integral to any effort to jumpstart our economy and reduce as rapidly as possible our 9.1 percent unemployment rate. The rapid growth of green jobs will boost demand in our economy by reducing unemployment, make America more competitive in the global economy, and protect our public health—all of which will result in greater economic productivity and long-term economic prosperity.

Session two: Climate Change

Short Introduction

Climate change is happening now and the situation will only get worse in the future, even if global efforts to reduce emissions prove effective.
Extreme weather and climate-related events that result in hazards such as floods and droughts will become more frequent and intense in many regions. This leads to many negative impacts on ecosystems, economic sectors and human health and well-being. Therefore, actions to adapt to the impacts of climate change are paramount and need to be adapted to specific circumstances in different parts of Europe.
Extreme weather threat makes adaptation to climate change a top priority.

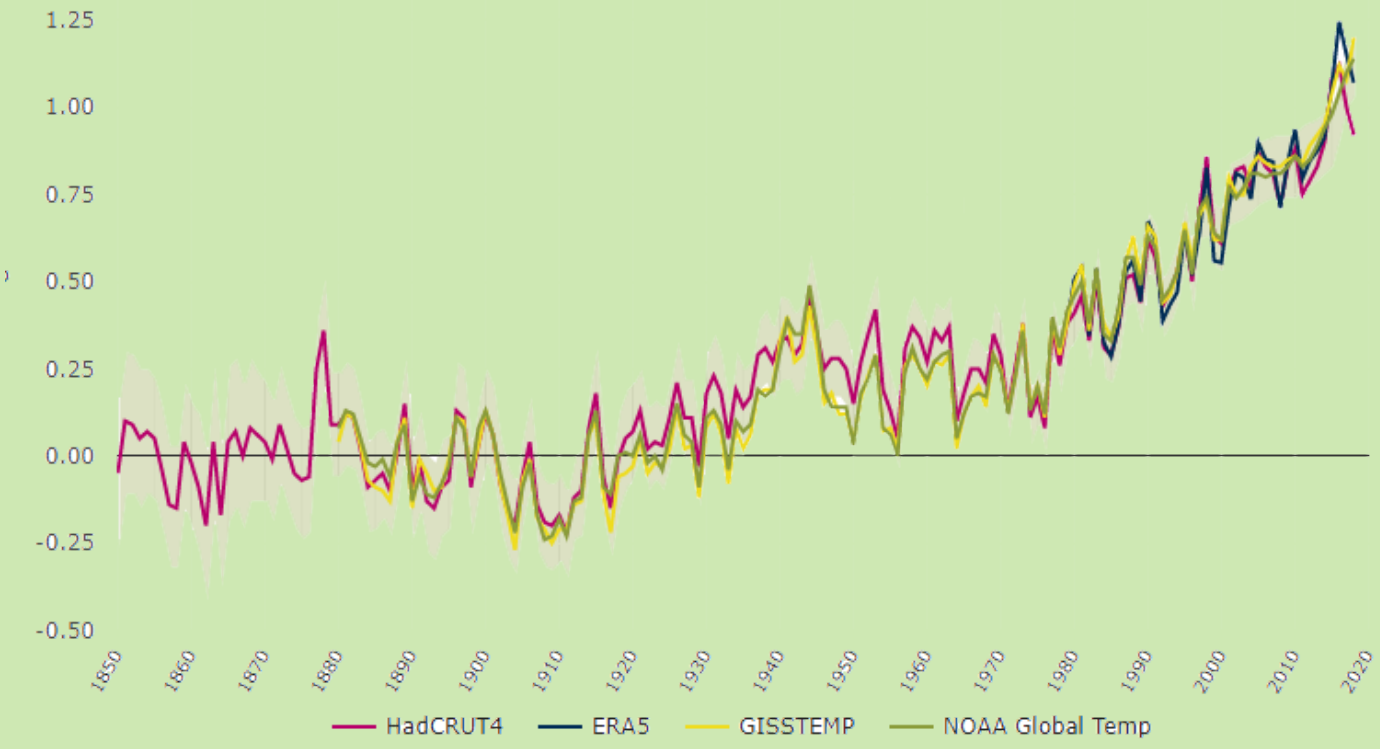
The dangers of climate change in Europe

Climate change is happening and we need to prepare for more intense heat waves, floods and storms, fires and water shortages. Different climate-related risks affect regions, sectors of the economy and members of society in different ways. The Risks of Europe Climate Change, an interactive EEA report based on the index, combines it all with a summary of past and predicted changes in Europe's most important climate risks.

Based on this report we draw the following key messages that we need to reflect:
·Climate change due to human activities are now unquestionably responsible for an increase in extreme weather events in Europe.
·Significant regional differences in conditions mean that the same responses that suit everyone do not match the growing threat that these climate risks pose to property and lives.
·People everywhere should prepare for more days with extreme temperatures and for more extreme rainfall events. The Mediterranean region in particular should be ready for hotter summers and more frequent droughts.
·High quality enriched data are essential to assess who is likely to be affected and how, however not all EEA member countries have had access to such fine data. Now all European regions do that.
·EEA tools help European countries implement their policies to adapt to climate change and reduce the risk of disasters, according to the European Climate Law and the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

Impacts, Vulnerability and Risks

The average annual surface temperature in Europe has risen at a faster rate than the global average temperature. The largest temperature rises have occurred in Southern Europe in summer and in the Arctic region in winter.
The following table shows the graph of temperature changes:
Annual average - The global average of surface temperatures in the years 1850-2020



- According to various observational data of the average annual global temperature near the surface (land and ocean), the last decade (2009–2018) was 0.91 ° C to 0.96 ° C warmer than the pre-industrial average, which which makes it the warmest decade in the world.a new record in temperature rise.

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- The average annual temperature for the European land area for the last decade (2009–2018) was between 1.6 ° C and 1.7 ° C which makes it the warmest decade in history. In Europe, 2018 was among the three warmest years recorded.
- Climate models project a further increase in the average global temperature during the 21st century (for the period 2081-2100 compared to 1986-2005) between 0.3 ° C and 1.7 ° C
- The average global temperature rise is projected to exceed 2 ° C compared to pre-industrial levels by 2050.
- The average annual soil temperature in Europe is projected to increase by the end of this century (2071-2100 compared to 1971-2000) in the range of 1.0 ° C to 4.5 ° C .The highest warming is forecast in Northeastern Europe and Scandinavia in winter and Southern Europe in summer.
- The number of warm days doubled between 1960 and 2018 across the European land area.
- Europe has experienced several extreme heat waves since 2000 (2003, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2014, 2015, 2017 and 2018). According to a high emission scenario (RCP8.5), extreme heat waves as strong as these or even stronger are predicted to occur as often as every two years in the second half of the 21st century. In Southern Europe, they are projected to be particularly strong.

At the same time, rainfall is generally declining in southern Europe and rising in the north, and with significant seasonal variations as well as projected increases in the intensity and frequency of heat waves and floods.
Climate change poses an additional pressure on ecosystems. Causes northward and upward displacement in the distribution of many plant and animal species, which may lead to extinction in some local areas. Moreover, climate change affects many socio-economic sectors, including agriculture, forestry, energy production, tourism and infrastructure. Finally, most of the projected economic impacts in Europe are negative.
European regions, including urban areas, that are particularly vulnerable to climate change include:

·Southern Europe and the Mediterranean basin;
·mountain areas;
·coastal areas, deltas and floodplains;
·The Far North of Europe and the Arctic.

Policies and actions

Adaptation to climate change is necessary. The negative impacts of climate change are already being felt across Europe and will increase in the future, even after Europe has become a climate-neutral continent.

We need to anticipate the current and expected effects of climate change and take appropriate action to prevent or minimize impacts. Strategies and actions are needed at local, national, transnational and EU level.
Actions include:
- Technological measures
- Ecosystem based measures
- Measures that address behavioral changes.

European Union on climate change

The inclusion of adaptation to climate change in EU sectoral policies and EU funds is promoted for:
1- Agriculture,
2- Biodiversity
3- Buildings
4- Coast management
5- Reducing the risk of disasters
6- Ecosystem based adaptation,
7- Energy,
8- Financing in forestry, health, sea and fishing, transport
9- Urban and water management.

The European Commission's assessment of the EU Adaptation Strategy reveals that the strategy has met its objectives to promote action by Member States, action on "climate resilience" at EU level and to support better informed decision-making by Member States. of the EEA.
EEA member states are at various stages of preparing, developing and implementing national adaptation strategies and plans. Almost all have adopted their national adaptation strategy and many have developed adaptation plans.

Transnational regions

Transnational European regions are sensitive to climate change in the wide range of economic sectors and natural ecosystems they cover. Their exposure and sensitivity are influenced by non-climatic factors, such as changing land use patterns and population change.

All European regions have already experienced the negative impacts of climate change and are likely to be affected even more in the future. There are specific adaptation strategies for four macro-national regions: the Baltic Sea, the Danube, the Alps and the Adriatic and Ionian regions. Other transnational regions have developed specific joint transnational adaptation strategies or action plans, but the level of implementation varies.

Cities, towns and suburban areas

Climate change will affect the environment, economy and society in cities and towns, raising new challenges for urban planning and management. Adaptation actions are being undertaken by a growing number of cities and municipalities, supported through the EU-funded Covenant on Climate and Energy and other city networks.

Climate change, one of the biggest challenges of our time

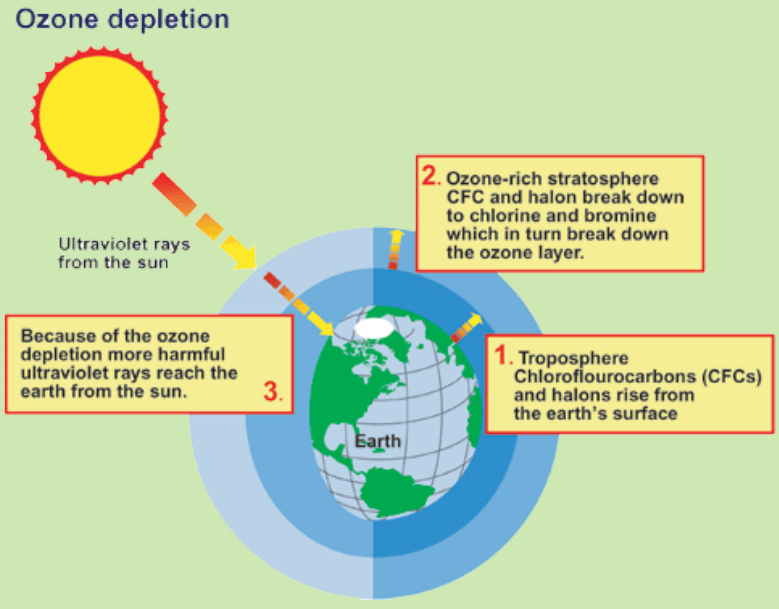
Climate change is already happening: temperatures are rising, droughts and wildfires are starting to happen more often, rainfall patterns are changing, glaciers and snow are melting and the average global sea level is rising. To mitigate climate change, we must reduce or prevent emissions related to human activities.

Protecting the ozone layer while also preventing climate change

Forty years ago, scientists warned that a hole in the ozone layer that surrounds the earth could have serious effects on human health and the environment. This problem is being solved thanks to a global agreement to ban the use of ozone-depleting chemicals that damage the ozone layer. But now scientists are concerned that the substances used to replace these ozone-depleting chemicals are acting to block heat inside the earth, exacerbating the greenhouse effect.

Many chemical-containing substances contained CFCs before international agreements restricted their use.
Climate change and the consequences created by ozone depletion
What is the ozone layer and how is it damaged?
The ozone layer is located in the stratosphere between 15 km and 30 km above the ground. It absorbs most of the sun's ultraviolet radiation. The ozone layer plays an important role in protecting human health. It also prevents radiation damage to plants, animals and materials.

Ozone-depleting substances (ODS) are synthetic chemicals that have been used worldwide in a wide range of industrial and consumer applications. The main uses of these substances were in refrigeration and air conditioning equipment and in fire extinguishers. Other important uses include chemicals with diffusers (substances for cleaning the premises, toilets, killing insects), insulating foams, etc.



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The protection of the ozone layer also protects the climate.

Reducing ozone-depleting substances has also had a beneficial side effect. Ozone-depleting substances are also very powerful greenhouse gases, contributing to this phenomenon like other substances widely known to have a greenhouse effect such as carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4) and nitrogen oxide (N2O). Therefore, by reducing emissions of ozone-depleting substances, the Montreal Protocol has protected both the ozone layer and the climate at the same time.

The magnitude of this benefit is considerable. The emission reduction expected as a result of compliance with the Montreal Protocol is estimated globally at 10-12 giga-tonnes of CO2 equivalent between 1985 and 2010 (Velders et al. 2007). In contrast, the target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions under the Kyoto Protocol (assuming full compliance by all developed countries) is estimated at 1-2 giga-tonnes of CO2 equivalent on average per year between 2008 and 2012, compared to base year. emissions. The gradual elimination of these emissions (known as ODS) that change the climate according to the Montreal Protocol has thus avoided greenhouse gas emissions by an amount 5-6 times higher than the target of the Kyoto Protocol for 2008-2012.

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