



Philippines Wins Regional Ozone Quiz; Sri Lanka a Close Second



Bangkok, 21 August 2007 – Lawrence B. Medina and Paulo Miguel G. Manzanilla, students from the Philippines Science High School, today beat schools from 16 countries to come out the winner of the Regional Ozone Quiz organized by OzonAction Programme of UNEP's Division of Technology, Industry and Economics in cooperation with Ruamrudee International School, Bangkok where the semi-final and final leg of the competition was held. The winning team wins US\$1500 as well as a trophy and medal.

D M N C Kolambage and S Sudsrshani Madumali Silva from the Sri Lankan Maris Stella College came a close second in the competition, winning US\$1000 as well as a trophy and medal. Students from both schools will also receive an all financed trip to the 20th Anniversary celebrations of the Montreal Protocol which will be held in Montreal, Canada from 16-21 September 2007.

“The schools will also utilize the prize money to carry out an ozone project to raise awareness in their school and city,” said Thanavat Junchaya, UNEP Regional Network Coordinator.

The Regional Ozone Quiz is one of many activities planned for the 20th Anniversary of the Montreal Protocol on 16 September 2007. One of the most successful environmental agreements to date, the Montreal Protocol has succeeded in phasing out substances that harm the ozone layer in developed countries, led to the closure of many ozone depleting chemical producing plants, and deterred the creation of industries that use them.

“Our aim is to raise awareness of ozone layer protection among schools and students in the region and provide an opportunity for them to learn and share with each other. These students have spent the last several months researching and learning about the Montreal Protocol, and it is gratifying to see the amount of knowledge they have acquired,” said Atul Bagai, Regional Officer (Networking), Compliance Assistance Programme.

Thirty-two students from 16 countries in Asia Pacific – finalists of national ozone quizzes held in each of these countries – participated in the competition that was held from 20-21 August 2007. Two students from each country between 17-18 years of age were selected following national ozone quiz rounds held between April and July this year. The countries include: Afghanistan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Iran, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

UNEP is the United Nations system's designated entity for addressing environmental issues at the global and regional level. Its mandate is to coordinate the development of environmental policy consensus by keeping the global environment under review and bringing emerging issues to the attention of governments and the international community for action.

Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer

The Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer is an international treaty designed to protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production and consumption of a number of substances believed to be responsible for ozone depletion. The treaty was opened for signature on September 16, 1987 and entered into force on January 1, 1989. Since then, it has undergone five revisions, in 1990 (London), 1992 (Copenhagen), 1995 (Vienna), 1997 (Montreal), and 1999 (Beijing). Due to its widespread adoption and implementation it has been hailed as an example of exceptional international cooperation with Kofi Annan quoted as saying it is "Perhaps the single most successful international agreement to date..."

About the Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) for Asia and the Pacific

In 2002, UNEP as an Implementing Agency of the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol made a conscious departure from the past in assisting developing countries to enable them to implement the Montreal Protocol. This departure emerges from the new context in which developing countries now operate under the compliance regime of the Protocol. The new context of compliance regime requires countries to: achieve and sustain compliance, promote a greater sense of country ownership and implement the agreed Executive Committee framework for strategic planning.

In line with this re-orientation, UNEP proposed through the Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) to begin moving from project management approach to a direct implementation initiative through its specialized staff. Consistent with the above approach the Regional Office for Asia and Pacific (ROAP) CAP team has developed to be the centre for policy advice, compliance guidance and conduct training to refrigeration technicians, customs officers and other relevant stakeholders on compliance issues, promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation and promote high-level awareness by utilizing UNEP's staff.

For more information about Division of Technology, Industry and Economics and the OzonAction Programme, please go to <http://www.unep.fr/en/branches/ozonaction.htm>

Multilateral Fund Information can be found at http://www.multilateralfund.org/about_the_multilateral_fund.htm

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