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Stratospheric ozone depletion, UV radiation and health



It has been recognized for several decades that the release of chlorofluorocarbons and other atmospheric pollutants depletes stratospheric ozone, which in turn increases human exposure to ultraviolet radiation, causing skin cancer and cataracts.

The recognition of direct effects on human health effects was a major stimulus to the Montreal Protocol, which acts to reduce emissions of pollutants that weaken the ozone layer. Although this international agreement is proving highly effective in reducing risks in the long term, UV radiation remains a health hazard.

The World Health Organization, and partner organizations - through the Intersun project - have developed and promote the UV Index, a tool to inform and educate the public about sun protection.

Further information

- [Stratospheric ozone depletion links](#)
- [Visit WHO's Ultraviolet radiation website](#)
- [Visit the Intersun programme webpage](#)
- [Visit UNEP's Ozone Secretariat website](#)
Includes information on ozone treaties

Documentation

- [Global solar UV index - a practical guide \[pdf, 430 kb\]](#)
Joint recommendations of WHO, WMO, UNEP and ICNIRP

HIGHLIGHTS

[New global project on health adaptation to climate change](#)



[Poster](#)

[Dr Margaret Chan, editorial. Cutting Carbon, Improving Health \[pdf 91kb\]](#)

[Climate change: a time of need and opportunity for the health sector \[pdf 63kb\]](#)

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World Health
Organization
20 Avenue Appia
1211 Geneva 27
Switzerland

Tel.: +41 22 791 1603
Fax: +41 22 791 1383
E-mail:
carbonfootprint@who.int

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