



**14th September, 2018 The National Ozone Unit under the Department of Climate Change of MEIDECC marks the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer under the theme “Keep Cool and Carry on”, this morning at Customs Conference Room.**

The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 16th September as the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer which commemorated the date of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete Ozone Layer signing in 1987. Since September 16th is a Sunday, the Department of Climate Change marked the International Day today, through a training workshop on HPMP Stage II Customs and Enforcement with Customs Department staff.

The Director of the Department of Climate Change Ms Lu’isa Tu’i’afitu Malolo said the responsibility to protect the ozone layer and climate does not lie with the government’s alone. Individuals also play a huge role in protecting the ozone layer by using their refrigerators, air conditioners and others responsibly.

“The Government fully recognized that close cooperation and support from the general public is very critical. International Ozone Day is the moment that all of us not only in Tonga but also in other countries should jointly celebrate the protection of the ozone layer. It is the moment to think about how we can maintain the momentum of phasing out ozone-depleting substances, and at the same time, maximizing climate benefits in the future.”

She told the participants that the Montreal Protocol will continue to regulate ozone-depleting substances while also contributing more to the fight against global warming through the Kigali Amendment. This amendment is expected to avoid up to 0.5°C of global warming by the end of the century, while continuing to protect the ozone layer.

“The Kigali Amendment allows the Protocol to target a reduction in the use of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), which became widely used substitutes for ozone-depleting substances. HFCs are also powerful climate-warming gases. Countries that ratify the Kigali Amendment have committed to cutting the production and consumption of HFCs by more than 80 percent over the next 30 years and replacing them with planet-friendly alternatives.”

Acting Deputy CEO for the Department of Customs Mr. Sau Niulala said the Customs

Department has three main roles and one of it is Border Security where ozone-depleting substances come under.

He said that the training is important to them in terms of their role in making sure that everything that comes into our shores is safe and will not harm the ozone layer.

The event was blessed by the President of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tonga, Rev. Saia Vea.

ENDS

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