

“We know that more and more the environmental problems of the United States...or any other nation are not just national problems. They are global ones...More than any time in history, the environmental challenges we face go beyond national borders. And so must our solutions. We must work together to protect the environment.”

*President Bill Clinton  
March 22, 2000*

# Protecting the Global Environment

When Americans celebrated the first Earth Day 30 years ago, our focus was largely our own backyard — our polluted rivers and dirty skies. Today, we recognize that many environmental challenges know no borders, and that to meet them, we must work closely with other nations.

Under the leadership of President Clinton and Vice President Gore, the United States has been at the forefront of international efforts to protect the “global commons” — the oceans, for instance, and the ozone layer. The Administration also has helped forge international agreements, and worked directly with individual nations, to reduce the use of toxic chemicals, preserve endangered species, and protect tropical forests and biodiversity around the globe.

Finally, the President and Vice President have been forceful voices for stronger environmental safeguards in trade and lending policies, to ensure that the new global economy helps promote, rather than undermine, environmental protection worldwide.



## Healing the Ozone Layer

One of the most significant threats to the global environment was the widespread use of chemicals that erode the ozone layer, which protects humans and other life on Earth from the sun’s harsh ultraviolet rays. The Montreal Protocol, perhaps the most successful international environmental treaty ever, has led to a dramatic reduction in the production and use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and other ozone-depleting chemicals. Although previously released chemicals will remain in the atmosphere for many years, scientists say recent data show that the ozone layer is now on its way to recovery.

- Leading successful negotiations to reduce Chinese production of halons and CFCs faster than required under the Protocol; and leading efforts to bring Russia into compliance with the Protocol by securing financial assistance for the closure of CFC production facilities.
- Securing an accelerated international schedule for the phase-out of methyl bromide, a leading ozone depleter.

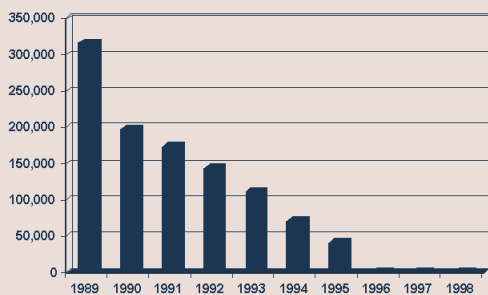
## Promoting Environmentally Responsible Trade

A new global economy is helping to bring prosperity to other nations, and posing new challenges for ensuring that this new growth is environmentally sound. The President and Vice President have outlined a strategy to ensure that U.S. efforts to expand trade and promote development reflect a strong commitment to achieving environmental protection worldwide.

Last year, the President signed an Executive Order requiring careful assessment and written review of the potential environmental impacts of major trade agreements so that environmental considerations can guide the development of U.S. positions in trade negotiations. The President also issued a White House Policy Declaration on Environment and Trade, outlining a set of principles to guide U.S. negotiators and to ensure that the work of the World Trade Organization is supportive of sustainable development and environmental protections at home and abroad.

The Administration also has worked to strengthen environmental standards in international lending. It has instituted stronger standards at U.S. export agencies, and promoted similar efforts at the World Bank and other international financial institutions, including targets for clean

**U.S. Consumption of CFCs**  
in metric tons



Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; OCEPA

The Clinton-Gore Administration has worked aggressively to implement and strengthen the Protocol by:

- Successfully phasing out CFCs by 1996 and other major ozone-depleting substances by 1994, and approving the introduction of more than 300 safer alternatives.
- Investing more than \$300 million a year in research on atmospheric chemistry and stratospheric ozone depletion.

energy lending. The President recently secured a commitment from other G8 partners for common environmental guidelines for export credit agencies by 2001.

### Targeting Toxic Threats

In the United States, strong, comprehensive measures have significantly reduced the use of toxic chemicals, ensured safer disposal, and guaranteed the public greater access to information on their use and potential health risks. The United States has led several international efforts to achieve similar improvements elsewhere around the world:

**Prior Informed Consent.** In 1998, the U.S. joined 94 other nations in an international agreement ensuring developing countries greater access to information on the risks posed by banned and severely restricted chemicals and pesticides.

**Phasing Out Persistent Pollutants.** The Administration is leading international negotiations to phase out 12 of the most dangerous, persistent organic pollutants — such as PCBs, DDT and dioxin — which threaten health and safety around the world.

**Halting Radioactive Waste Dumping.** President Clinton led the world in calling for a global ban on ocean dumping of low-level radioactive waste. The U.S. was the first nuclear power to advocate the ban, which other nations agreed to in 1993.

### Stabilizing Population Growth

At the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, Vice President Gore helped forge a historic consensus for a global program to stabilize the world's population. The international strategy calls for increased availability of family planning, the empowerment of women through measures such as enhanced educational opportunities, and a reduction in infant and child mortality.

### Ensuring the Safety of Biotechnology

Biotechnology — the use of genetic engineering to introduce new traits into species — can achieve tremendous benefits through increased agricultural productivity. Without careful monitoring, however, it could also pose risks to the environment and biodiversity. U.S. leadership in negotiations earlier this year helped achieve international agreement on a Biosafety Protocol that will help guard against these risks without unduly disrupting world food trade.

The Protocol establishes an international framework for addressing the potential environmental impact of certain bioengineered products. Information and expertise exchanged through this system will help governments assess the potential risks and benefits of biotechnology in a more predictable and consistent manner.



Michelle Zador

## Galapagos Islands Preserving a World-Class Treasure

The famed Galapagos Islands harbor some of the most unique wildlife anywhere on Earth, and efforts by the U.S. government are helping to ensure that this one-of-a-kind ecological treasure is well protected for years to come.

Located on the equator 600 miles off the coast of South America, the Galapagos are home to giant tortoises, blue-footed boobies, and other exotic species that helped inspire Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. But more than a century after Darwin's historic voyage, new pressures from tourism, development, and fishing put these resources at risk.

The Agency for International Development offered to help forge a new consensus on the islands' future. With its local partner, the Charles Darwin Foundation, USAID sponsored a policy dialogue among conservationists, tourism operators, commercial fishermen, and other stakeholders. The result was the Galapagos Special Law, signed two years ago by Ecuadorean President Dr. Fabian Alarcon.

This landmark law declares the Galapagos a "national priority," restricts commercial fishing in nearby waters, limits new migration to the islands, and establishes an inspection and quarantine system to keep non-native species out. It also steers more tourism revenue to conservation needs, helping to protect one of the world's true natural wonders for future generations.

## Promoting Sustainable Development

Throughout the developing world, nations are struggling to raise their standard of living and provide their people with a more promising future. Too often, the daily struggle for basic necessities involves environmentally destructive activities — such as slash-and-burn agriculture — which, in turn, undermine natural assets that could sustain more productive economies. The Administration is working through several programs to help developing countries build stronger economies by protecting their natural endowments.

Currently, the Administration is supporting efforts in 43 countries to improve management of biologically rich habitats and to address environmental challenges such as forest fires, overfishing, poaching, deforestation, agricultural encroachment, and mining. Guided by the principle that environmental protection is linked with democracy and governance, these programs promote transparency and citizen participation in the management of natural resources.

## Protecting Rare and Endangered Species

Many of the world's richest ecosystems are also the most endangered. The Administration is working with many governments around the world to help protect and restore threatened species by protecting habitat and combating illegal poaching and trade.

Since 1993, the Administration has provided more than \$12 million in grants to more than 30 African and Asian countries for programs critical to the survival of elephants, rhinos, and tigers, leveraging more than \$25 million in matching contributions. These efforts have helped stabilize populations of the African elephant by stemming illegal ivory poaching. On his recent trip to India, the President announced nearly \$250,000 in grants to non-government organizations for urgent, on-the-ground projects to protect endangered tigers and elephants. The grants will help conserve habitat, expand research and training, and strengthen anti-poaching efforts.



## Indonesia Mapping a Path to Survival

The sound of bulldozers was an alarming wakeup call to the Kenok and Jorat tribes of southeastern Indonesia. Without any notice, the tribes' traditional lands would soon be home to a fish processing factory, threatening their ability to continue the subsistence farming that had sustained them for so long.

The tribes immediately began to organize, but numerous meetings with government officials were fruitless. So they looked elsewhere for help.

With funding from the Agency for International Development (USAID), and technical assistance from the World Wildlife Fund, an international environmental organization, the tribes conducted detailed mapping of their lands, identifying indigenous resources and documenting their importance to their traditional way of life.

The information helped open a new dialogue with decision-makers, and a year later, the factory project was shelved.

Zadrak Wamebu, a leader of an Indonesian group working with the tribes, said the USAID-funded project also helped demonstrate to the tribes the importance of building coalitions.

"Before the [project], we worked on our own and would have felt awkward about asking other organizations for help," he said. "After [the project], we felt confident about reaching out and asking for assistance from other [groups]. We knew they had the skills, that we shared goals and that we could work together."