

# EDITORIAL

*A report on the outcome of the Ad Hoc Meeting for the Harmonization of Data on Production etc., of Substances that deplete the Ozone Layer, is printed on page 56. On the whole, the Montreal Protocol is not progressing as well as most people would like. Indeed, in the light of the latest scientific findings, a public debate is currently taking place on the usefulness of the present Protocol and some critics have even gone so far as to speak of a possible "re-negotiation" being necessary.*

*We feel that although the Protocol leaves much to be desired, the most rational course to follow would be to ratify it as soon as possible, and then consider possible amendments. Of course, in view of the recent negative data the question then arises as to what sort of time-frame should be foreseen for such a re-examination.*

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*FAO has now taken concrete steps to carry out a budget, programme and structural reform of the Organization. Following a meeting of the Budget and Finance Committee at the end of May, a 13 member group of experts was appointed to examine the activities of FAO. This group, which includes 5 members from OECD countries, will commence its work in July.*

*Following a systematic review of all aspects of the Organization, the Group will issue its report in November 1988, with proposals for possible changes or reforms.*

*One amendment already accepted will give the big donor countries a greater influence on the amount of the budget and the priorities to be set in the work programme.*

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*The EEC's European Year of the Environment (EYE), ended on the 21 March. Readers will find on page 74 the actions taken by the Council of Ministers at their last meeting in that period.*

*We will not analyze the achievements or omissions of EYE - this is a question of viewpoint. However, one of the most interesting and promising of the decisions was the launching of the Network for Environmental Technology Transfer, or Nett (which means, incidentally, "clean" in French!) and which has been accessible from the last day of EYE.*

*With the creation of this network, the Commission hopes to speed up the development and application of ecologically sound technologies, especially by industry. Studies carried out in all the EC countries have shown that such a network meets a need on the part of companies. In addition to its own database, Nett provides access to a range of environmental databases.*

*This month also marks the end of the German Presidency. Environment Minister Toepfer had optimistically hoped that he could speed up the decision process and bring in new initiatives. However, his failure to do this has less to do with his own commitment and more with the lack of it on the part of some of his European colleagues.*

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*Wolfgang Rüchler*