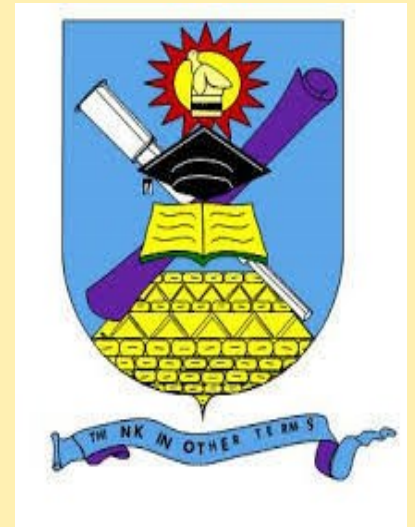


RESEARCH AND INNOVATION OFFICE



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UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO INFORMATION DAY



Name: Dr P Dewah

Department: Records and Archives

UNESCO set aside the 28th of September (every year) as the “International Day for Universal Access to Information”. This was done in order to raise awareness of the right to seek and receive information which is an integral part of the right to freedom of expression, and as key to sustainable development.

The RIO Newsletter team had an opportunity to sit down with Dr Dewah, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Records and Archives. Dr Dewah gave us more insight on what is being done in relation to the universal access to information, especially in records and archival management.

There are two types of archives; namely public and private archives. Public archives are those found in the national archival centres and can be accessed by individuals who want to use the information. The Public archives are acquired into archival centres such as the National Archives of Zimbabwe. The information that they contain is made available to students, amateur researchers, historians, town planners, genealogists among others and individuals who may want to do research on a particular topic of their interest. This research includes historical or indigenous aspects. Some individuals may use archives to access family tree history records in order to access information about family relationships.

In archival management information is processed, described and arranged so that it becomes easily accessible and retrievable. On average it shouldn't take archives officials more than three minutes to retrieve information. Archives are acquired, preserved and made available for use by future generations.

It is the right of citizens to access information. The challenge is that most people are not aware that it is their right to access information. Information is regarded as power, as it has economic value in that it can be utilised for research purposes and even decision making purposes. In Zimbabwe, there are days that are celebrated such as the International Archives Day which is on the 9th of June. This day is celebrated in order to raise awareness among the public of the importance of records and archives, in order to make it understood that records and archives provide the foundation for their rights and identity, raise the awareness of senior decision makers of the benefits of records management for good governance and development raise the public, private and public sectors' awareness of the necessity of preserving archives for the long-term, and of providing access to them, promote and bring to the attention of the larger public unique, extraordinary and rare documents preserved in archival institutions and to improve the image of records and archives and enhance their visibility globally.

We are now in the Information Age where information is produced in abundance leading to information overload. However, the paradoxes of this Information era is that many people are denied access to information by lack of education, lack of training, lack of facilities among others. Inability to read, write, count and lack of access to information blights the lives of people and condemns them to stress, hunger and spread of preventable diseases. In as much as there should be universal access to information, information is kept from the public to protect the citizens from information which is considered to be sensitive. However, this information is politically censored to maintain stability and peace in the community.

Literacy is also an underlying factor that causes challenges when it comes to access to information. Illiteracy and lack of access to information blights' the community's life this is because information is a necessity, lack of information could also be the cause of poverty and illnesses as individuals do not access information for better healthcare or standards of living. Communities have insufficient information centres such as libraries. In most cases it is found that access to information is low because of the digital divide. Access to information is irrelevant if the information is to be exposed to illiterate individuals because they will not be able to utilise it. However, this issue has been resolved by the non-governmental organisations that try to improve literacy by supporting the girl child such as the CAMFED Zimbabwe (Campaign for Female Education in Zimbabwe) and the Adult literacy Organisation of Zimbabwe (ALOZ) that support adult literacy.

Ozone Layer Preservation

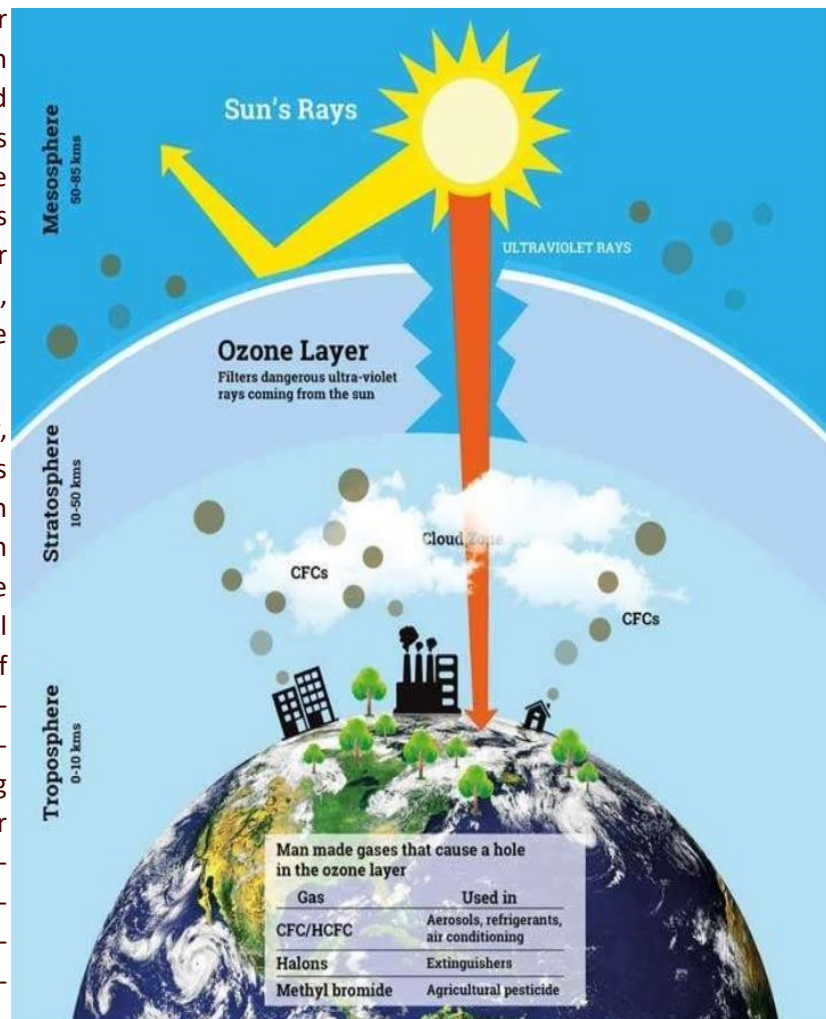
On the 16th of September the world celebrated the Ozone Layer Preservation day.

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According to BBC, the recovery of the ozone layer over Antarctica cannot be taken for granted and requires constant vigilance. That's the message from Dr Jonathan Shanklin, one of the scientists who first documented the annual thinning of the protective gas in the 1980s. This year's "hole" in the stratosphere high above the White Continent is the smallest in three decades. "It's welcome", says Dr Shanklin, "but we should really only view it as an anomaly".

"To see whether international treaties are working or not, you need to look at the long term," Dr Shanklin told BBC News. A quick glance this year might lead people to think that the ozone hole is fixed, when it's not. Although things are improving, there are still some countries who are manufacturing chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), the chemicals that have been responsible for the problem. The world should not be complacent, though the 2019 ozone hole could be the smallest in three decades.

Dr Shanklin, along with Joe Farman and Brian Gardiner, first alerted the world in 1985 that a deep thinning was occurring in the ozone layer above Antarctica each spring. Ozone filters out harmful ultraviolet radiation from the Sun. The team's discovery, confirming the theoretical predictions of others, led to the Montreal Protocol. This international treaty phased out most of the chlorine- and bromine-containing chemicals involved in ozone depletion. At the time, these substances were being used widely as refrigerants, cleaning agents, and as the propellants in aerosol cans. Dr Shanklin and his colleagues at the British Antarctic Survey made their seminal observations at the Halley research station on the Brunt Ice Shelf. They used a Dobson photo spectrometer - an instrument that is traditionally operated manually.



<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment->

OZONE LAYER PRESERVATION DAY

World Ozone Day is observed on 16 September every year to spread awareness among people about the depletion of Ozone Layer and search for possible solutions to preserve the layer. On this day people from all over the world are expected take part talks and seminars that focus on the Ozone layer. Let us read more about World Ozone Day, its history, significance and some facts about Ozone Layer.

The theme of World Ozone Day 2019 was '32 years and Healing'. This year's theme celebrates three decades of remarkable international cooperation to protect the Ozone Layer and the climate under the Montreal Protocol. It also reminds the people to keep up the momentum to ensure healthy people and a healthy planet.

<https://www.jagranjosh.com/general-knowledge/world-ozone-day-1568460515-1>



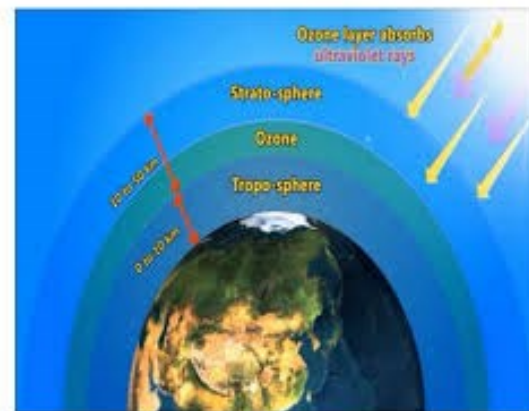
Name: Dr G.G Nyambuya

Department: Applied physics

The RIO Newsletter team interviewed Dr Nyambuya from the Department of Applied Physics and this is what he had to say:

The ozone layer is a protective layer in the upper atmosphere, which consists of three bound oxygen atoms (O_3). Amongst others, the ozone layer protects human beings from toxic radiation emanating from outer space. If unfiltered, this radiation will cause skin cancers. Ozone depletion is the reduction in the concentration of ozone (O_3) in the ozone layer. The ozone layer is being destroyed by free radical chemicals that react with ozone reducing the ozone layer quantity in the atmosphere. Industrially produced products are the major causes of ozone layer depletion such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as well as Methane which are believed to be responsible for the depletion of the ozone layer.

Amongst others, the measures being taken to preserve the ozone layer are ozone awareness campaigns. For example, as a direct result of these campaigns, CFC Industries in western countries are being fined for the CFCs they are releasing into the atmosphere. In response, most CFC industries are now using alcohol instead of



CFCs for producing sprays. Certainly, as a global community we could also help preserve the ozone layer by being conscious of what we emit into the Earth's atmosphere.

Further, Dr Nyambuya pointed out that the issue of ozone depletion is also connected in an intimate way, with climate science where the majority of climate change activists argue that the depletion of the ozone layer is responsible for the global climate change, which is currently being witnessed World over.

Furthermore, Dr Nyambuya highlighted that ozone depletion cannot be singled out as the major driver of climate change as there are other factors that may contribute to climate change such as greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide, Methane and Nitrous Oxide which can trap infrared radiation, leading to increased mean surface global temperatures, hence, a change in the way the seasons come and go. Therefore, the ozone layer depletion is interwoven with the problem of climate change.

In addition, in his recent research on the topic, Dr Nyambuya said he is looking at possible astrophysical influences on the Earth's climate.

UNITED NATIONS DAY.

The United Nations (UN) is an intergovernmental organisation responsible for maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations, achieving international cooperation, and being a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations. It is the largest, most familiar, most internationally represented and most powerful intergovernmental organization in the world. The UN is headquartered on international territory in New York City; other main offices are in Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna and The Hague.

United Nations Day marks the anniversary of the UN Charter's entry into force, and celebrates everything that the UN represents and has achieved since its establishment in 1945. With the ratification of this founding document by the majority of its signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council, the United Nations officially came into being.

24 October has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948. In 1971, the United Nations General Assembly recommended that the day be observed by Member States as a public holiday.

Each year, the global network of UN Information Centres organises a variety of events to mark UN Day. Activities range from ceremonies, seminars, panel discussions, symposiums to series of briefings for students, art competitions, rallies, film screenings and book/photo exhibitions, media campaigns- including interviews and newspaper supplements- and social media campaigns.

<https://www.un.org/en/events/unday>



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COMING UP IN THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

- WORLD TSUNAMI AWARENESS DAY
- AFRICA INDUSTRIALISATION DAY
- INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

