Ozone hole over Antarctica larger than usual, scientists say

16 September 2021

Atmospheric ozone absorbs ultraviolet light coming from the sun. Its absence means more of this high-energy radiation reaches the Earth, where it can harm living cells.

Peuch noted that last year's ozone hole also started out unremarkably but then turned into one of the longest-lasting ones on record.

The Montreal Protocol, signed in 1987, led to a ban on a group of chemicals called halocarbons that were blamed for exacerbating the annual ozone hole.

Experts say that while the ozone layer is beginning to recover, it's likely to take until the 2060s for the ozone-depleting substances used in refrigerants and spray cans to completely disappear from the atmosphere.

© 2021 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without permission.