



Stratospheric Processes and their Role in Climate

A Project of WCRP



December 21, 2011

The Honourable Peter Kent
Minister of the Environment
Les Terrasses de la Chaudière
10 Wellington Street, 28th floor
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0H3
Canada

Re: Closure of Canadian ozone network

Dear Minister Kent:

We would like to thank you for your letter to us dated December 20, 2011, in response to our original letters of September 15 and 22, 2011, which had expressed our concern with regards to the possible closure of the Canadian ozone network. We are immediately distributing your letter to the additional signatories of our September 22 letter and to the wider SPARC community.

We are pleased to hear from you that Environment Canada recognizes the fundamental importance of atmospheric ozone for environmental sustainability, and is committed to a science-based evaluation of its ozone measurement needs to support sound science for decision-making and Canada's fulfillment of its international obligations for environmental monitoring. Ozone plays several distinct roles within the climate system — as a pollutant, as a greenhouse gas, and as a blocker of harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation — which is why different, complementary measurement techniques are required, and we recognize that this can lead to some confusion. Thus we welcome a comprehensive, integrated analysis of Canada's ozone measurement needs.

In particular, we are pleased to hear that the long-running Arctic ozonesonde stations will continue, as these represent especially unique measurements. The first-ever Arctic ozone “hole”, which was observed last spring (and for which the Canadian ozonesondes provided essential information), has underscored the fact that the atmosphere is always capable of surprising us — which is why we need continuing measurements of essential climate variables such as ozone. We are also very pleased to hear that you will maintain EC's research capacity for data interpretation and trends analysis; this is very important, as measurements are of no value unless there is good quality control and they are interpreted correctly. Finally, we are very pleased to hear that EC will continue to host the World Ozone and Ultraviolet Data Centre.

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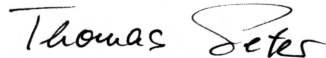
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Yours sincerely,



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cc.

- Dr. Paul Boothe, Deputy Minister, Environment Canada
- Dr. Karen Dodds, Assistant Deputy Minister, Environment Canada, Science and Technology Branch
- Mr. David Grimes, Assistant Deputy Minister, Environment Canada, Meteorological Service of Canada
- Dr. Charles Lin, Director General, Environment Canada, Atmospheric Science and Technology