**The Healing Ozone Layer**

**Amid all the doom and gloom over global warming, some good news about our planet: The hole in the ozone layer over Antarctica is slowly healing. The 7.6 million-square mile breach was caused by chlorine-containing chemicals known as chlorofluorocarbons. Once CFCs reach the upper atmosphere, they linger for decades and break down ozone, the gas that protects life on Earth by absorbing harmful ultraviolet light from the sun. After scientists discovered the hole back in the 1980s, nearly 200 countries signed the 1987 Montreal Protocol, an agreement to phase out the production and use of CFCs. Since then, the breach has grown and shrunk from year to year -- but a new study confirms that it's definitely healing, reports NBCNews.com. Using chemical data collected by NASA's Aura satellite, researchers found that steady annual declines in chlorine between 2005 and 2016 resulted in a 20 percent drop in ozone depletion. The hole is expected to heal completely in 50 to 60 years. "We may have turned the corner," says lead author Susan Strahan, an atmospheric scientist with NASA. *(The Week magazine, January 26, 2018)***

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