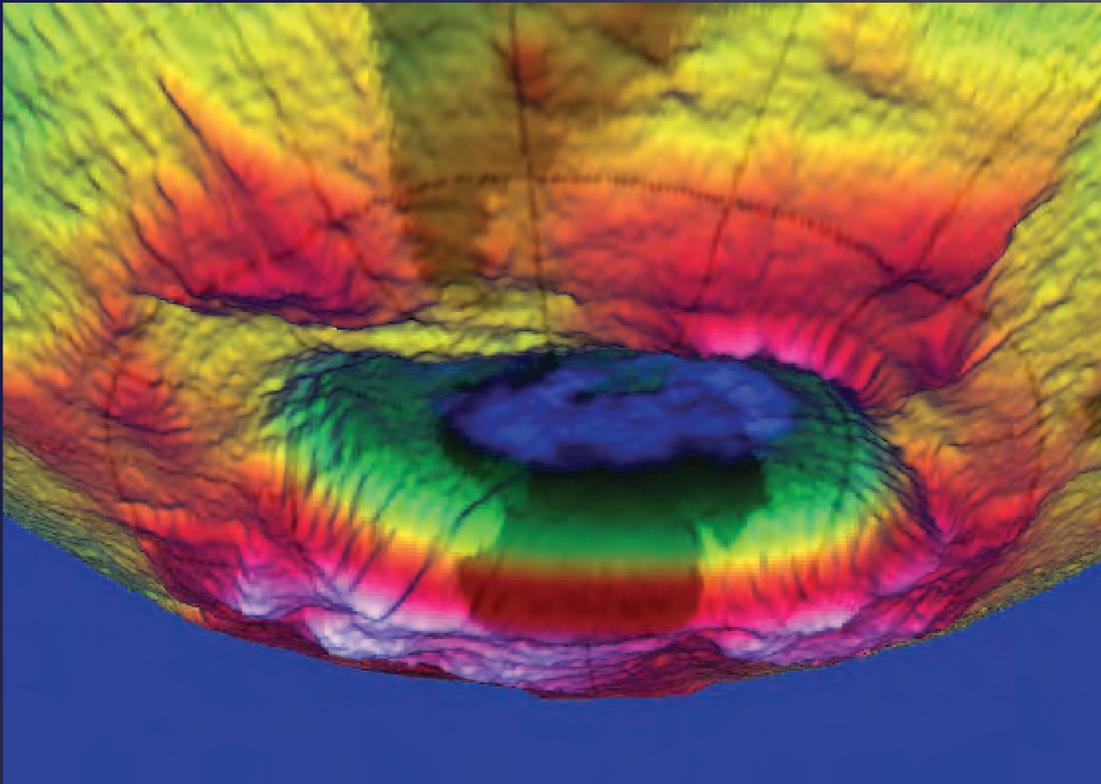
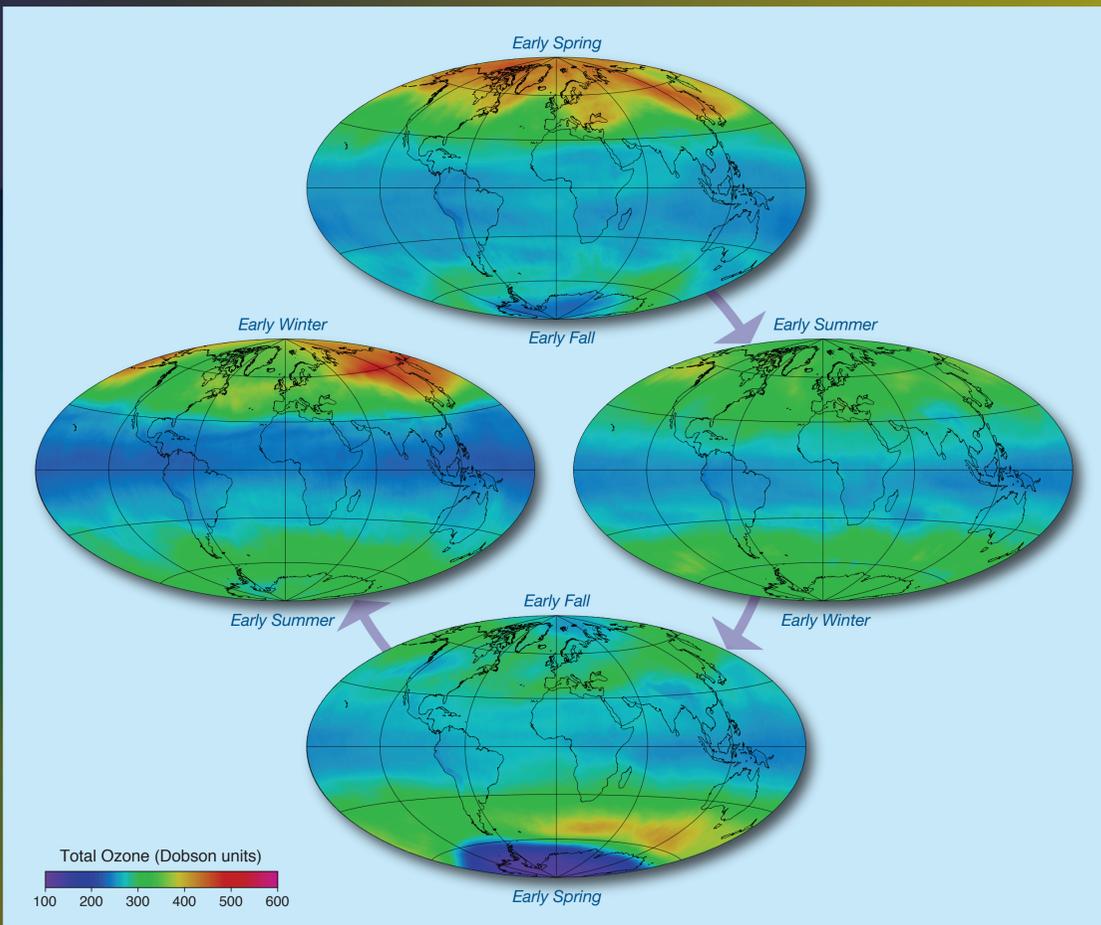


A Vigilant Eye on the Ozone

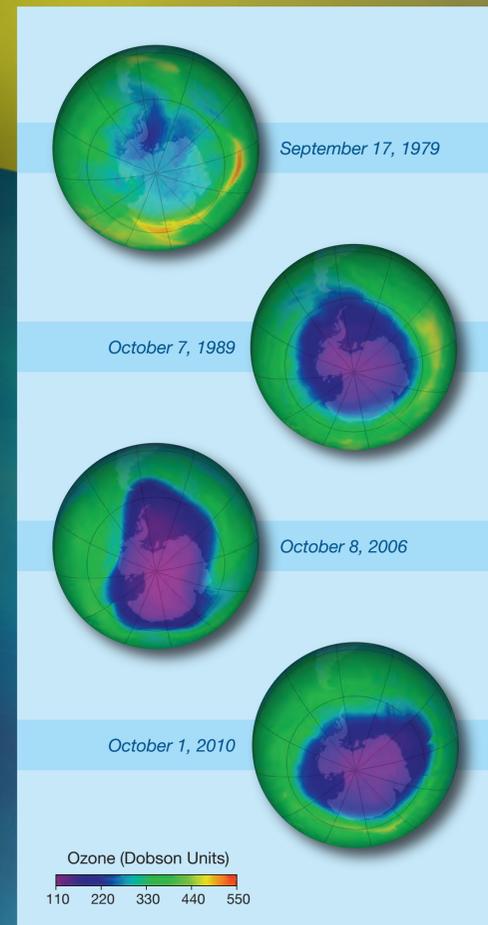


Using a mapping spectrometer, NASA rendered this 3-D image of the hole in the ozone layer high above Antarctica.

- Ozone only represents a tiny fraction of our atmosphere, but is crucial for life on Earth.
- It's a colorless, gaseous form of oxygen.
- Ozone plays two different roles on Earth.
 - In our upper atmosphere, ozone forms a shield that blocks cancer-causing ultraviolet radiation from the Sun.
 - In our lower atmosphere, ozone is a harmful pollutant, damaging to our lungs and leaves of plants.



Seasonal cycles of ozone around the globe via NASA's Total Ozone Mapping Spectrometer (TOMS).



Four years of maximum ozone depletion—the 'Ozone Hole' is visible as purple and dark blue areas.

Measurements made by NASA's TOMS instruments from 1979-2003, by the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute (KNMI) from 2004-present.

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