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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF  
THE MULTILATERAL FUND FOR THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL  
Eighty-seventh Meeting  
Montreal, 28 June-2 July 2021<sup>1</sup>

**PROJECT PROPOSAL: GABON**

This document consists of the comments and recommendation of the Secretariat on the following project proposal:

Phase-out

- HCFC phase-out management plan (stage I, fifth tranche) UNEP and UNIDO

<sup>1</sup> Online meetings and an intersessional approval process will be held in June and July 2021 due to coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

Pre-session documents of the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol are without prejudice to any decision that the Executive Committee might take following issuance of the document.

## PROJECT EVALUATION SHEET – MULTI-YEAR PROJECTS

## Gabon

(I) PROJECT TITLE	AGENCY	MEETING APPROVED	CONTROL MEASURE
HCFC phase-out plan (Stage I)	UNEP (lead), UNIDO	62 <sup>nd</sup>	35% by 2020

(II) LATEST ARTICLE 7 DATA (Annex C Group I)	Year: 2020	15.4 (ODP tonnes)

(III) LATEST COUNTRY PROGRAMME SECTORAL DATA (ODP tonnes)								Year: 2020	
Chemical	Aerosol	Foam	Fire fighting	Refrigeration		Solvent	Process agent	Lab use	Total sector consumption
				Manufacturing	Servicing				
HCFC-22				0.0	15.4				15.4

(IV) CONSUMPTION DATA (ODP tonnes)			
2009 - 2010 baseline:	30.20	Starting point for sustained aggregate reductions:	30.20
CONSUMPTION ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING (ODP tonnes)			
Already approved:	10.57	Remaining:	19.63

(V) BUSINESS PLAN		2021	2022	Total
UNEP	ODS phase-out (ODP tonnes)	1.06	0.00	1.06
	Funding (US \$)	61,020	0	61,020

(VI) PROJECT DATA			2010	2011-12	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total	
Montreal Protocol consumption limits			n/a	n/a	30.20	30.20	27.18	27.18	27.18	27.18	27.18	19.63	19.63	n/a	
Maximum allowable consumption (ODP tonnes)			n/a	n/a	30.20	30.20	27.18	27.18	27.18	27.18	27.18	19.63	19.63	n/a	
Agreed funding (US \$)	UNEP	Project costs	90,000	0	46,000	0	0	50,100	0	50,000	0	54,000	0	290,100	
		Support costs	11,700	0	5,980	0	0	6,513	0	6,500	0	7,020	0	37,713	
	UNIDO	Project costs	130,000	0	0	0	0	119,900	0	0	0	0	0	0	249,900
		Support costs	11,700	0	0	0	0	10,791	0	0	0	0	0	0	22,491
Funds approved by ExCom (US \$)	Project costs		220,000	0	46,000	0	0	0	170,000*	0	50,000*	0	0	486,000	
	Support costs		23,400	0	5,980	0	0	0	17,304*	0	6,500*	0	0	53,184	
Total funds requested for approval at this meeting (US \$)	Project costs		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	54,000*	54,000	
	Support costs		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7,020*	7,020	

\*The third tranche was due for submission in 2016, the fourth in 2018 and the fifth in 2020.

<b>Secretariat's recommendation:</b>	Blanket approval
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## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. On behalf of the Government of Gabon, UNEP as the lead implementing agency, has submitted a request for funding for the fifth and final tranche of stage I of the HCFC phase-out management plan (HPMP), at the amount of US \$54,000, plus agency support costs of US \$7,020 for UNEP only<sup>2</sup>. The submission includes a progress report on the implementation of the fourth tranche and the tranche implementation plan for 2021 to 2022.

### Report on HCFC consumption

2. The Government of Gabon reported a consumption of 15.4 ODP tonnes of HCFC in 2020, which is 49 per cent below the HCFC baseline for compliance. The 2016-2020 HCFC consumption is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. HCFC consumption in Gabon (2016-2020 Article 7 data)**

HCFC-22	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Baseline
Metric tonnes	380.00	360.00	365.00	330.00	280.00	549.09
ODP tonnes	20.90	19.80	20.08	18.15	15.40	30.20

3. HCFC-22 is used in the servicing and maintenance of refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) equipment, and its consumption has been decreasing due to the implementation of the HPMP, particularly the training of customs officers on the identification and control of HCFCs and HCFC-based equipment; the training of technicians on good refrigeration servicing practices; and the introduction of HFC-based equipment. Preliminary estimates show that in 2020, 40 per cent of the RAC equipment imported in the country was HFC-based.

### *Country programme (CP) implementation report*

4. The Government of Gabon reported HCFC sector consumption data under the 2020 CP implementation report which is consistent with the data reported under Article 7 of the Montreal Protocol.

### Progress report on the implementation of the fourth tranche of the HPMP

### *Legal framework*

5. Gabon established a licensing and quota system for the import of HCFCs and HCFC-based equipment since 2013. The National Ozone Committee, an advisory body to the Ministry of Forestry, Environment and the Protection of Natural Resources, is responsible for establishing and distributing annual HCFC import quotas. The National Ozone Unit (NOU) provides the clearance for the issuance of the authorization for HCFC import and the release by the Customs Department. The Government of Gabon also enforces the sub-regional regulation for the CEMAC (“Communauté Economique et Monétaire de l’Afrique Centrale”) which harmonizes the management of controlled substances, including HCFCs in the sub-region.

6. The Government of Gabon ratified the Kigali Amendment on 28 February 2018 and has started the process to amend the ODS National legislation to include the control and monitoring of HFCs, which is expected to be finalized by the end of 2022.

7. Four training sessions were held for a total of 50 customs, enforcement and environmental officers on the ODS import and export licensing system, illegal trade, national regulations and control measures and

<sup>2</sup> As per the letter of 20 April 2021 from the Ministry of Forestry, Environment and the Protection of Natural Resources of Gabon to the Secretariat.

the identification of ODS and ODS-based equipment. A training programme for an additional 50 customs officers will be conducted before the end of 2021. The barriers for the introduction of an online monitoring system for HCFCs as used in other Francophone African countries have been identified and include the lack of a digital platform to efficiently run the system, and different administrative procedures between the Ministries of Trade and Environment and the Customs authorities; further consideration of these barriers is required, thus the online systems will be included in stage II of the HPMP.

#### *Refrigeration servicing sector*

8. Four training workshops were held for a total of 117 RAC technicians on good servicing practices, recovery and recycling techniques and the safe handling of flammable alternatives.

9. Tools and equipment (e.g., cylinders for refrigerants, electronic scales, vacuum pumps, safety goggles, brazing kits, pinch-off tool, flaring tool, refrigerant recovery unit, and safety gloves) were procured and distributed to support one training centre (“Centre de Formation et de Perfectionnement Professionnels Basile” ONDIMBA) which was selected as the beneficiary in a previous tranche and the association of refrigeration technicians.

#### *Project implementation and monitoring*

10. Of the US \$10,000 approved for project monitoring and reporting, US \$8,000 was disbursed to hire two consultants (one refrigeration expert and one customs expert) to assist the NOU team in monitoring the implementation of the HPMP and collecting programme data, and US \$2,000 was used for staff travel for coordination.

#### Level of fund disbursement

11. As of April 2021, of the US \$486,000 approved so far, US \$426,509 had been disbursed (US \$236,100 for UNEP and US \$190,409 for UNIDO) as shown in Table 2. The balance of US \$59,491 will be disbursed in 2021.

**Table 2. Financial report of stage I of the HPMP for Gabon (US \$)**

<b>Tranche</b>		<b>UNEP</b>	<b>UNIDO</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Disbursement rate (%)</b>
First	Approved	90,000	130,000	220,000	100
	Disbursed	90,000	130,000	220,000	
Second	Approved	46,000	0	46,000	100
	Disbursed	46,000	0	46,000	
Third	Approved	50,100	119,900	170,000	65
	Disbursed	50,100	60,409	110,509	
Fourth	Approved	50,000	0	50,000	100
	Disbursed	50,000	0	50,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>236,100</b>	<b>249,900</b>	<b>486,000</b>	<b>88</b>
	<b>Disbursed</b>	<b>236,100</b>	<b>190,409</b>	<b>426,509</b>	

#### Implementation plan for the fifth and final tranche of the HPMP

12. The following activities will be implemented between July 2021 and December 2022:

- (a) Four training workshops for at least 100 customs officers at different ports of entry on control and identification of HCFCs and HCFC-based equipment and control of illegal trade (UNEP) (US \$20,000);
- (b) Four training workshops for at least 100 RAC technicians on good refrigeration practices, recovery and recycling techniques, safe handling of flammable refrigerants, and on

enhancing the sustainability of the training and capacity building of the RAC sector (UNEP) (US \$20,000);

- (c) Continue support for training centres through the validation of training needs in consultation with the NOU and stakeholders and supply needed equipment (e.g., cylinders, electronic scales, vacuum pumps, brazing kits, flaring tools, refrigerant recovery unit) (UNIDO) (US \$59,491 from the previous tranche); and
- (d) Project management and implementation (UNEP) (US \$14,000) to engage two national consultants to assist the NOU in monitoring the implementation of HPMP activities and collecting data (US \$9,000) and staff travel for project coordination (US \$5,000).

## **SECRETARIAT'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **COMMENTS**

#### Progress report on the implementation of the fourth tranche of the HPMP

13. UNEP explained that the delay in submitting the tranche was due to the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, and a change of the ozone officer. However, the Government of Gabon was committed to doing its utmost to complete all the delayed activities.

#### *Legal framework*

14. The Government of Gabon has already issued HCFC import quotas for 2021 at 14.3 ODP tonnes, which is lower than the Montreal Protocol control targets.

15. The Secretariat also asked for more details about the implementation of activities resulting from the recommendations of the verification on HCFC consumption submitted to the 83<sup>rd</sup> meeting, which included activities related to training of customs officers and providing them with ODS identification equipment to enhance their capacity in controlling imports at the borders. UNEP explained that the training of customs officers completed during the fourth tranche took these recommendations into account; the training module was upgraded to include new concepts particularly focusing on border control and monitoring illegal imports, and ODS identification equipment was provided and officers were trained in the use of the equipment. Other recommendations from the verification report (i.e., to develop and to provide training modules on the use of low- and zero-GWP alternative technologies to vocational training schools) will initially be conceptualized through a thematic workshop for the French-speaking Network on the use of low- and zero-GWP alternative technologies and their availability which will be held once physical meetings are allowed; development of specific modules based on the results of the thematic workshop will be included in the implementation of the fifth tranche.

#### *Refrigeration servicing sector*

16. In providing further details on the outcomes of the delayed component to procure equipment for training centres and the refrigeration technicians' association, funded as part of the third tranche for UNIDO, UNEP noted that during the fourth tranche implementation equipment was provided to the training centre and included 20 sets of portable recovery units, and ancillary equipment (e.g., manifolds, portable leak detectors, digital clam meters, scales and thermometers, piercing pliers, tube cutters); 10 sets of refrigerant identifiers and tool sets; and 30 vacuum pumps. Although the current pandemic conditions affected the frequency of training workshops and the delivery time of equipment, one training workshop for 10 trainers was completed in 2020.

17. In addition, UNEP clarified that under the UNIDO component the refrigeration technicians' association is both a partner and a beneficiary and therefore also received training equipment; a comprehensive approach was adopted to ensure that the distributed equipment opens an opportunity for the technicians belonging to the association to gain knowledge on good practices in the maintenance of and recovery from the equipment.

#### Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on HPMP implementation

18. The Government of Gabon has faced challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the lock down policy and travel restrictions. As a result, there has been a delay in the implementation of the fourth tranche activities and the preparation and submission of the action plan for the fifth and final tranche. The activities of the fourth tranche are nearly completed; the training activities were done virtually and physically. As the request for the fifth tranche is being submitted to this meeting, the implementation of activities will inevitably be delayed.

#### Completion of stage I

19. The completion date for stage I of the HPMP is 31 December 2021. The Government of Gabon is requesting an extension of the date of completion to 31 December 2022 due to the delays in the implementation of the previous tranches for various reasons mentioned above. The Secretariat supports this extension on the understanding that no further extension will be requested. Stage II of the HPMP will be submitted to the 89<sup>th</sup> meeting.

#### Gender policy implementation

20. The country has started tracking the gender disaggregated data during customs and technicians training in line with decision 84/92(d)<sup>3</sup>. During the implementation of the fourth tranche, 15 per cent of customs officers and 10 per cent of technicians trained were women. The implementation of the fifth tranche will include activities to further disseminate information about the gender policy and specific targets for participants of workshops will be set.

#### Sustainability of the HCFC phase-out

21. The Government of Gabon works closely with the refrigeration technicians' association to ensure sustainability of the training of service technicians. The association was provided with equipment to support the training of technicians belonging to the association to gain knowledge on good practices in the maintenance of and recovery from the equipment. Sustainability of the phase-out of HCFCs is also achieved by continuous capacity building of customs in identification and control of HCFCs. In addition, the Government has ratified the Kigali Amendment and will integrate HCFC phase-out with the HFC phase-down to achieve synergy in a sustainable manner to address both the ozone and climate issues.

#### Conclusion

22. Gabon is making progress in implementing stage I of its HPMP despite the delay in the submission of previous tranches. The HCFC consumption reported under Article 7 data for 2020 is already 49 per cent below the HCFC baseline for compliance. The overall level of funding disbursement is 88 per cent. The proposed action plan is for the requested extended implementation period from 2021-2022 to address the requirements for the training of additional customs officers, refrigeration technicians and stakeholders. Overall, the activities implemented so far have contributed to strengthening the HCFC servicing sector. The

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<sup>3</sup> Decision 84/92(d) requested bilateral and implementing agencies to apply the operational policy on gender mainstreaming throughout the project cycle.

activities planned under the fifth and last tranche will further ensure the long term sustainability of the phase-out of HCFCs.

**RECOMMENDATION**

23. The Fund Secretariat recommends that the Executive Committee:

- (a) Takes note of the progress report on the implementation of the fourth tranche of stage I of the HCFC phase out management plan (HPMP) for Gabon; and
- (b) Approves, on an exceptional basis, the extension of the date of completion of stage I of the HPMP for Gabon to 31 December 2022, given the delay in implementing phase-out activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and noting that no further extension of project implementation would be requested.

24. The Fund Secretariat further recommends blanket approval of the fifth and final tranche of stage I of the HPMP for Gabon, and the corresponding 2021-2022 tranche implementation plan, at the funding level shown in the table below:

	<b>Project title</b>	<b>Project funding (US \$)</b>	<b>Support cost (US \$)</b>	<b>Implementing agency</b>
(a)	HCFC phase-out management plan (stage I, fifth and final tranche)	54,000	7,020	UNEP