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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
THE MULTILATERAL FUND FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL
Ninety-eighth Meeting
Montreal, 22–26 June 2026
Item 8(c) of the provisional agenda[1]

PROJECT PROPOSAL: THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

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

Phase-out

• HCFC phase-out management plan (stage II, second tranche)	UNEP and UNDP	Blanket approval

[1] UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/98/1

PROJECT EVALUATION SHEET – MULTI-YEAR PROJECTS

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

PROJECT TITLE	AGENCY	MEETING APPROVED	CONTROL MEASURE
HCFC phase-out plan (stage II)	UNEP (lead), UNDP	88th	100% phase-out by 2030

ARTICLE 7 DATA (Annex C, Group I)	**Year: 2025**	1.18 ODP tonnes

COUNTRY PROGRAMME SECTORAL DATA (ODP tonnes)							**Year: 2025**
Substance	Aerosol	Foam	Firefighting	Refrigeration		Solvent	Total sector consumption
				Manufacturing	Servicing		
HCFC-22					1.18		1.18

CONSUMPTION DATA (ODP tonnes)			
2009–2010 baseline:	66.21	Starting point for sustained aggregate reductions:	17.00
CONSUMPTION ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING			
Already approved:	17.00	Remaining:	0.00

ENDORSED BUSINESS PLAN		**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**Total**
UNEP	ODS phase-out (ODP tonnes)	1.59	0	1.84	3.43
	Funding (US $)	315,867*	0	208,433	524,300
UNDP	ODS phase-out (ODP tonnes)	2.10	0	0.96	3.06
	Funding (US $)	225,235	0	103,255	328,490

*Including US $135,600 for UNEP for additional activities to maintain energy efficiency (decision 89/6)

PROJECT DATA			**2021**	**2022 – 2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**	**2028-2029**	**2030**	**Total**
Consumption (ODP tonnes)	Montreal Protocol limits		43.04	43.04	43.04	21.52	21.52	21.52	21.52	0	n/a
	Maximum allowable		6.00	6.00	6.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	0	n/a
Amounts approved in principle (US $)	UNEP	Project costs	140,000	0	160,000	0	0	185,000		115,000	600,000
		Support costs	17,733	0	20,267	0	0	23,433		14,567	76,000
	UNDP	Project costs	218,000	0	210,500	0	0	96,500		0	525,000
		Support costs	15,260	0	14,735	0	0	6,755		0	36,750
Funds approved by ExCom (US $)		Project costs	358,000								358,000
		Support costs	32,993								32,993
Total funds recommended for approval at this meeting (US $)		Project costs					370,500				370,500
		Support costs					35,002				35,002

Secretariat's recommendation:	Blanket approval

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. On behalf of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNEP as the lead implementing agency has submitted a request for funding for the second tranche of the HCFC phase-out management plan (HPMP), at a total cost of US $405,502, consisting of US $160,000, plus agency support costs of US $20,267, for UNEP and US $210,500, plus agency support costs of US $14,735, for UNDP. The submission includes a progress report on the implementation of the first tranche and the tranche implementation plan for 2026 to 2028.

Report on HCFC consumption

2. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo reported a consumption of 1.18 ODP tonnes of HCFCs in 2025, which is 98 per cent below the country's HCFC baseline for compliance. The 2021–2025 HCFC consumption is shown in table 1.

Table 1. HCFC consumption in 2021–2025 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Article 7 data)

HCFC-22	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Baseline
Metric tonnes (mt)	22.10	18.40	16	14.20	21.52	1,203.82
ODP tonnes	1.22	1.01	0.88	0.78	1.18	66.21

3. HCFC consumption in the Democratic Republic of the Congo increased in 2025 compared to the 2023 and 2024 consumption levels. The National Ozone Unit (NOU) and National Ozone Committee (NOC) originally set very low quotas to encourage less dependency on HCFCs but were challenged by local importers due to remaining demand. In order to mitigate the risk of illegal imports, the NOU and NOC decided to readjust and increase the quotas, while keeping the overall consumption below the reduction targets as set by the Agreement of stage II of the HPMP.

Country programme implementation report

4. The HCFC consumption data provided by the Government of Democratic Republic of the Congo in its CP implementation report for 2025 is consistent with the data reported under Article 7 of the Montreal Protocol.

Status of implementation of stage I of the HCFC phase-out management plan

5. Stage I of the HPMP was completed on 30 June 2020, in line with the extension approved by the Executive Committee by decision 84/15. The project completion report was submitted on 17 September 2021.

Progress report on the implementation of the first tranche of stage II of the HCFC phase-out management plan

Legal framework

6. Since 2005, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has in place a licensing system for HCFC imports, and the quota system has been operational since 2011. The HCFC quotas are issued yearly by the Ministry of Trade and the NOU.

7. During the first tranche, a total of 202 customs officers and law enforcement officers, including 34 women, were trained via eight training sessions on HCFC control measures and the control of illegal trade. One training session for four customs trainers was also conducted.

8. The customs training curriculum was reviewed and adopted following two meetings: one with the NOC with 11 participants, including four women, and one with national stakeholders to adopt the revised curriculum, with 23 participants, including eight women.

9. One workshop was organized with environmental policymakers, the Customs Department, the Trade Department and importers to discuss the revision of the existing regulations to control ODS. The revisions to the current regulatory framework are planned to commence once the Government has ratified the Kigali Amendment, to ensure alignment with the provisions and compliance requirements.

Refrigeration servicing sector

10. During the implementation period, the following activities were implemented:

(a) Fifteen training sessions were organized to train a total of 382 refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) technicians, including 31 women, on good servicing practices. One training session for 15 RAC trainers was also conducted. The national refrigeration training curriculum and national code of conduct for refrigeration technicians were updated and adopted following a meeting with the NOC with 15 participants, including four women, and a meeting with national stakeholders with 31 participants, including eight women;

(b) Discussions on the introduction of the technician certification scheme commenced at the country level. Five trainers were certified with the fluorinated gases (F-gas) certification. An international firm was selected to design an F-gas certification scheme in French, tailored to country-specific needs, which is expected to be ready by the end of 2026;

(c) Two training workshops were held for 35 end users and importers, including seven women, on HCFC phase-out and the adoption of low-GWP technologies. Three RAC associations have been strengthened through the provision of support for meetings, awareness-building activities and training sessions;

(d) Several meetings were organized to identify the equipment requirements of the technical training institutes, evaluate the viability of existing centres;

(e) A feasibility study for the establishment of the recovery and reclaim system was conducted by the NOU which revealed existing issues of widespread equipment obsolescence, limited functionality, and institutional incompatibilities within existing centres. Public-sector facilities lack the mandate, structure, and operational capacity needed for specialized refrigerant recovery and reclaim (RR) activities. Consequently, a public-private partnership (PPP) based approach was identified as the most viable model and 10 strategic sites were identified for the establishment or improvement of reference centres; and

(f) A procurement list of tools and equipment required for the next tranches of the HPMP was compiled and submitted to the NOU for review, with purchasing expected to commence by the end of 2026.

Project implementation and monitoring

11. The NOU and UNEP have been monitoring activities, reporting on progress, and working with stakeholders to phase out HCFCs. Of the US $15,000 approved for project monitoring activities under the first tranche, US $15,000 was disbursed for project staff and consultants (US $7,500), travel (US $5,000) and meetings and workshops (US $2,500).

Level of fund disbursement

12. As of February 2026, of the US $358,000 approved so far (US $140,000 for UNEP and US $218,000 for UNDP) US $135,575 (37.9 per cent) had been disbursed (US $110,144 for UNEP and US $25,431 for UNDP). The balance of US $222,425 will be disbursed during implementation of second tranche.

Implementation plan for the second tranche of stage II of the HCFC phase-out management plan

13. The following activities will be implemented between July 2026 and June 2028:

(a) *Strengthening of monitoring and enforcement of ODS regulations and related policies*: Conduct training for 125 customs officers and law enforcement officers on HCFC control measures and control of illegal trade; undertake a revision of the existing regulations (UNEP) (US $35,000);

(b) *Capacity-building of RAC technicians and establishment of a certification scheme*: Conduct training of 525 RAC technicians on good servicing practices; establish the technician certification scheme, including conducting stakeholder consultations and certification of 125 technicians; conduct one training workshop for end users on HCFC phase-out and adoption of low-GWP technologies; strengthen RAC associations by supporting meetings, conducting awareness-building activities and training sessions (UNEP) (US $110,000);

(c) *Support to the industry and technical colleges through the provision of servicing equipment and toolkits and the establishment of two recovery and reclaim centres*: Procure and distribute tools and equipment for seven training centres assisted under stage I; establish a new master training centre; establish RR system, including one RR centre (UNDP) (US $210,500); and

(d) *Project monitoring*: Personnel and consultants for project monitoring (US $7,500), domestic travel (US $5,000) and meetings and workshops (US $2,500) (UNEP).

SECRETARIAT'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATION

COMMENTS

Verification report

14. The second tranche of stage II of the HPMP requires the submission of a verification report of HCFC consumption since 2021. UNEP indicated that the report is still being finalized and expected that it will be submitted by 31 July 2026, and no later than 12 weeks prior to the 99th meeting. In line with decision 72/19, the Treasurer will be requested to transfer the approved funds to UNEP and UNDP only after receipt by the Secretariat of the verification report confirming that the country was in compliance and the recommendations included therein will be addressed during the implementation of the second tranche.

Submission delays

15. The second tranche of stage II of the HPMP was due in 2024; however, implementation of the previous tranche experienced significant delays mainly due to a period of administrative transition, which led to institutional restructuring and temporary disruptions to ongoing activities. In addition, operational constraints related to access and field conditions in certain areas further affected implementation timelines. The activities are now on track and UNEP, UNDP and the NOU have confirmed that tranches will be implemented as planned.

<u>Progress report on the implementation of the first tranche of stage II of the HCFC phase-out management plan</u>

Legal framework

16. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has issued HCFC import quotas for 2026 at 1.20 ODP tonnes, which is lower than the Montreal Protocol control targets and the targets set in its Agreement with the Executive Committee.

17. In response to the Secretariat's enquiry about the delay and status of establishing the ban on the import of HCFC-based equipment and regulatory measures to control the intended emissions of refrigerant during installation, servicing and decommissioning by 1 January 2024, as noted in decision 88/47, UNEP explained that political situation in the country in the last few years significantly delayed the consultation and drafting process. Despite the work being done in preparing for the necessary legal documentation, there is still institutional difficulty in obtaining a signed interministerial decree to formalize the ban on both used and new HCFC-based equipment.

18. Alternatively, the NOU is currently pursuing a faster track by using the legal mandate of the NOC to license and control the import of RAC equipment, which could serve as a tool for banning the import of HCFC-based equipment, noting the NOC comprises representation from all relevant line ministries and government entities. This approach can be concluded and enacted by early 2027 at the latest. Regarding the establishment of regulatory measures to control intended emissions of refrigerants during installation, servicing, and decommissioning, the country intends to include this measure as part of a comprehensive package to manage refrigerants following the effective implementation of the RR system and operation of the reclamation centre, where a comprehensive refrigerant management regulatory package can be introduced.

19. In relation to the delay in supplying the refrigerant identifiers, UNEP clarified that due to administrative delays in the process, resources for procurement under the first tranche were used for the customs training activities, on the understanding that procurement will be made from resources under the second tranche. UNEP is currently examining expedited ways to authorize UNDP to conduct the procurement once the second tranche is approved.

20. UNEP also indicated that the planned border dialogue was no longer feasible due to recent political developments with neighbouring countries. The NOU acknowledges that this issue was not adequately considered during project development and should be removed from the intended deliverables of stage II of the HPMP.

Refrigeration servicing sector

21. The Secretariat requested details about the results of the feasibility study for the establishment of the recovery and reclamation system in the country, along with the business model, the expected amounts of refrigerant to be recovered and an indication of the most suitable institution in which to operate the reclamation centre, pursuant to decision 88/47. UNEP clarified that UNDP conducted the study in cooperation with the NOU, analyzing the potential locations and capacities, which revealed that many centres which were initially considered to host the RR equipment are inaccessible, and only five places identified can be further supported and used for the reclamation programme. The analysis also showed that of 355 related servicing equipment mapped, which were supplied in previous projects, only 29 per cent can be utilized to support the reclamation programme, and the rest are obsolete. It also suggested that the PPP business model approach should be followed, instead of the initially planned public facility, as the programme can capitalize on the technical expertise of the private sector and have greater flexibility in managing activities according to market needs. An indicative list of equipment to be procured is also

presented and is planned to be purchased during the implementation of the second tranche and a criterion was developed for selecting the host partner.

22. Further discussion with agencies during the review of the proposal, demonstrated that additional work is still needed to complete all the aspects of the study, including analysis of local RAC installations that can be addressed by the RR programme, expected quantities to recover/reuse/reclaim, economics of the RR programme (i.e. cost of virgin refrigerants versus recovered/reclaimed and cost of the service, logistics and transportation consideration, technical considerations related standards and testing of reclaimed refrigerants as well the technical capacities). UNDP acknowledged that additional work is required before considering the study as final and proceeding with the establishment of the RR programme and agreed with the NOU and the expert to complete the remaining elements and have the final study ready by end of 2026 latest. In this regard, the Secretariat recommended this tranche on the condition that the approved funds will not be transferred to UNDP until the Secretariat has reviewed the final report of the feasibility study for the establishment of a recovery and reclamation system in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to be submitted at least 10 weeks in advance of the 99th meeting of the Executive Committee.

23. In relation to the procurement of equipment for the training institute and technology college, UNDP clarified that it was due to an agreement with the Government to hold procurement until the outcomes of the study is released, so that procurement could reflect real needs, and to allow one bulk procurement given the instability experienced by the country. The bidding process is now completed, the contract awarded, and delivery expected within two to four months, including distribution.[2] The purchased equipment will cover both the training and the RR programme, while the rest of equipment to be purchased under the second tranche will be only dedicated to the reclamation programme and will be based on the final outcomes of the feasibility study.

24. The Secretariat also enquired about the submission of a component for additional energy efficiency activities under decision 89/6, which was included in UNEP's 2026 business plan. UNEP clarified that due to delay in discussing and coordinating the needs and suggested activities with the respective Ministry and government entities, the submission is deferred until 2027.

25. In response to the Secretariat enquiry on the development of the RAC certification scheme and code of practice, UNEP provided an update that an international firm is currently involved in conducting field visits and consultation meetings with different RAC training institutions with a plan to complete the draft proposed certification scheme and code of practice by end of third quarter of 2026. The code of practice covers good service requirements for domestic refrigeration appliances and commercial refrigeration applications, especially in retail and cold storage, heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems for office and commercial buildings, in addition to special appliances for health and pharmaceutical facilities.

Gender policy implementation

26. In line with decision 84/92(d), during the implementation of the previous tranche, the NOU promoted the Multilateral Fund's gender policy in HPMP activities by encouraging women's participation in planning, training, and decision-making, as well as collecting relevant data and discussing gender issues in workshops. In customs trainings, approximately 16.8 per cent of participants were women, and 8 per cent of participants receiving RAC technician training were women. The NOU is committed to ensuring that 20 to 30 per cent of customs officers and RAC technicians receiving training will be women, encourage RAC associations to promote the recruitment of women technicians, integrate gender awareness modules into the RAC training curriculum, conduct awareness campaigns on ozone protection led by women

[2] This includes recovery units, recovery cylinders, electronic manifold gauges, vacuum pumps, vacuum gauges, electronic scales, leak detectors, tubing tools, nitrogen kits, flushing stations, combustible gas leak detectors, high-flow-rate vacuum pumps and different servicing tools.

experts and technicians, collect sex-disaggregated data on women engagement and participation in RAC programmes, and include relevant indicators in project monitoring activities.

Sustainability of the HCFC phase-out and assessment of risks

27. Noting the instability the country has faced over the last few years, security risks identified in several regions within the country, and the subsequent delays in implementation of activities and submission of the second tranche, the Secretariat requested more information from UNEP about the planned measures to ensure that implementation of the second tranche will be implemented timely, while noting that substantial progress made in the implementation of the first tranche.

28. UNEP clarified that building on lessons learned from the implementation of the first tranche, including relying on police escorts for training missions for insecure regions often adds costs, creates resentment among communities and can even undermine trust in the programme. It was therefore agreed with the NOU to rely on more practical, cost-efficient and safe approaches, which include careful selection of training locations, avoiding conflict zones when designing the training activities and conducting and planning training sessions in conflict zones through the local trainers instead.

Conclusion

29. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has reduced its consumption of HCFCs to 1.18 ODP tonnes in 2025 which is 98 per cent below the HCFC baseline and 60 per cent below the Agreement target for the same year. The activities relating to the service sector, customs training and enforcement, development of certification scheme, and the update of local RAC training curricula are progressing despite encountered delays and challenges associated with the political and security situation in the country over the last few years. Activities planned for the second tranche will continue the monitoring of HCFC imports, including training of enforcement officers, the upgrade in technical capacities of RAC technicians and the provision of support to the local RAC associations, as well as facilitate the establishment of a national RR programme upon completion of the ongoing feasibility study and build the capacities of local training institutes upon the delivery of the training equipment. UNEP has committed to submit the verification report at the earliest by July 2026 and UNDP will submit the feasibility study no later than 10 weeks prior to the 99th meeting. The Secretariat recommends withholding the approved funds until it receives and reviews the verification report and the feasibility study.

RECOMMENDATION

30. The Fund Secretariat recommends that the Executive Committee note the progress report on the implementation of the first tranche of stage II of the HCFC phase-out management plan (HPMP) for the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and further recommends blanket approval of the second tranche of stage II of the HPMP for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the corresponding 2026–2028 tranche implementation plan, at the funding level shown in the table below, on the understanding that the approved funds will not be transferred to:

(a) UNEP and UNDP until the Secretariat has reviewed the verification report and confirmed that the Democratic Republic of the Congo was in compliance with the Montreal Protocol and the Agreement between the Government and the Executive Committee; and

(b) UNDP, also until the Secretariat has reviewed the final report of the feasibility study for the establishment of a recovery and reclamation system in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to be submitted at least 10 weeks prior to the 99th meeting of the Executive Committee.

	Project title	Project funding (US $)	Support costs (US $)	Implementing agency
(a)	HCFC phase-out management plan (stage II, second tranche)	160,000	20,267	UNEP
(b)	HCFC phase-out management plan (stage II, second tranche)	210,500	14,735	UNDP