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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: NIGER (THE)

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)	UNIDO and UNEP	Blanket approval

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

PROJECT EVALUATION SHEET – MULTI-YEAR PROJECTS

Niger (the)

PROJECT TITLE	**AGENCY**	**MEETING APPROVED**	**CONTROL MEASURE**
HCFC phase-out plan (stage II)	UNIDO (lead), UNEP	90th	100% phase-out by 2030

LATEST ARTICLE 7 DATA (Annex C, Group I)	Year: 2025	4.71 ODP tonnes

COUNTRY PROGRAMME SECTORAL DATA (ODP tonnes)							**Year: 2025**
Substance	Aerosol	Foam	Firefighting	Refrigeration		Solvent	Total sector consumption
				Manufacturing	Servicing		
HCFC-22					4.71		4.71

CONSUMPTION DATA (ODP tonnes)			
2009-2010 baseline:	15.98	Starting point for sustained aggregate reductions:	15.98
CONSUMPTION ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING			
Already approved:	15.98	Remaining:	0.00

ENDORSED BUSINESS PLAN		**2026**	**2027**	**2028**	**Total**
UNIDO	ODS phase-out (ODP tonnes)	1.66	1.67	0.00	3.33
	Funding (US $)	177,620	179,118	0	356,738
UNEP	ODS phase-out (ODP tonnes)	0.84	0.90	0.00	1.74
	Funding (US $)	95,485	101,700	0	197,185

PROJECT DATA			**2022**	**2023–2024**	**2025**	**2026***	**2027**	**2028–2029**	**2030**	**Total**
Consumption (ODP tonnes)	Montreal Protocol limits		10.38	10.38	5.19	5.19	5.19	5.19	0	n/a
	Maximum allowable		10.38	10.38	5.19	5.19	5.19	5.19	0	n/a
Amounts approved in principle (US $)	UNIDO	Project costs	243,500	0	166,000	0	167,400	0	118,100	695,000
		Support costs	17,045	0	11,620	0	11,718	0	8,267	48,650
	UNEP	Project costs	108,000	0	84,500	0	90,000	0	62,500	345,000
		Support costs	14,040	0	10,985	0	11,700	0	8,125	44,850
Funds approved by ExCom (US $)		Project costs	351,500							351,500
		Support costs	31,085							31,085
Total funds recommended for approval at this meeting (US $)		Project costs				250,500				250,500
		Support costs				22,605				22,605

*Second tranche was originally scheduled for submission in 2025.

Secretariat's recommendation:	Blanket approval

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. On behalf of the Government of the Niger, UNIDO as the lead implementing agency has submitted a request for funding for the second tranche of stage II of the HCFC phase-out management plan (HPMP), at a total cost of US $273,105, consisting of US $166,000, plus agency support costs of US $11,620, for UNIDO and US $84,500 plus agency support costs of US $10,985, for UNEP.[2] The submission includes a progress report on the implementation of the first tranche, the verification report on HCFC consumption for 2022–2025 and the tranche implementation plan for 2026–2027.

Report on HCFC consumption

2. The Government of the Niger reported a consumption of 4.71 ODP tonnes of HCFCs in 2025, which is 70.5 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 Niger (Article 7 data)

HCFC-22	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Baseline
Metric tonnes (mt)	164.7	135.8	101.9	91.2	85.7	290.5
ODP tonnes	9.06	7.47	5.60	5.01	4.71	15.98

3. HCFC-22 consumption has decreased as a result of the implementation of activities under the HPMP. These activities include the enforcement of a licensing and quota system, the training of customs officers and technicians, and the penetration of alternatives in the refrigeration servicing sector.

Country programme implementation report

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

Verification report

5. The verification report confirmed that the Government was implementing a licensing and quota system for HCFC imports and exports and that the total consumption of HCFCs reported under Article 7 of the Montreal Protocol for 2022–2025 was correct (as shown in table 1 above). The report concluded that the country was in compliance with the targets under the Montreal Protocol and its Agreement with the Executive Committee, and that the verified consumption levels remain well below the allowable limits. The verification report included recommendations relating to imports recording which is discussed in paragraph 12 below.

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

6. Stage I of the HPMP was extended up to 31 December 2026, in line with decision 97/13(c)(iii).

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

Legal framework

7. During the first tranche, the country strengthened its regulatory framework by revising regulations including those on the quota system for HCFC and HFC imports, on establishing the Niger's electronic single window system for foreign trade, and on the mandate and composition of the National Ozone Committee (NOC).

[2] As per the letter of 3 April 2026 from the Ministry of Environment, Water and Sanitation of the Niger to UNIDO.

8. A comprehensive analysis of the existing regulatory framework was conducted, which identified areas for further strengthening, including enforcement of regulations, stakeholder awareness, and reporting mechanisms. A strategy to address these in the existing laws and their implementation was developed, which includes revising and reinforcing regulations on HCFC import control, ensuring compliance with annual quotas, and strengthening capacity of enforcement officials. The quota system was updated, which included the introduction of reporting by importers, and a strategy for the eventual introduction of a ban of HCFC-based equipment was developed.

Refrigeration servicing sector

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

(a) *Strengthening of the capacity of customs to monitor and control HCFCs:* Two refrigerant identifiers were procured; 12 training sessions for 245 customs officers and agents (including 42 women) on preventing illegal trade in HCFCs, updated harmonized codes, and identification of refrigerants were conducted;

(b) *Strengthening of the capacity of refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) technicians:* A survey of current recovery and recycling (RR) operations across the country was conducted to assess the quantity of refrigerant being recovered and the feasibility of a reclamation centre for further actions under the second tranche; educational and regulatory materials (digital materials, banners and posters) on RR were developed and distributed; the first procurement shipment containing 10 sets of RR equipment and tools[3] and two training benches were delivered in December 2025 and will be distributed to two vocational schools and regional branches of Association of Refrigeration Professionals of the Niger; curricula of vocational schools were updated; code of good practices for RAC servicing was developed; standard operating procedures (SOPs) for handling flammable and hazardous refrigerants were developed; four master trainers were certified; nine training sessions for 309 RAC technicians (including 34 women) on good servicing practices and the safe use of flammable refrigerants were conducted; and

(c) *Awareness-raising activities:* Two awareness-raising workshops for a total of 60 participants from government institutions, industry and end users were conducted on ozone layer protection, the HPMP and Kigali HFC implementation plan (KIP) activities, the centre of excellence, low-GWP technologies, and refrigerant management.

Project implementation and monitoring

10. The national ozone unit (NOU) and UNIDO have been monitoring activities, reporting on progress, and working with stakeholders to phase out HCFCs. Of the US $30,000 approved for programme monitoring, a total of US $30,000 was disbursed on consultants (US $14,000), travel (US $10,000) and meetings (US $6,000).

<u>Level of fund disbursement</u>

11. As of February 2026, of the US $351,500 approved so far (US $243,500 for UNIDO and US $108,000 for UNEP), US $231,111 (66 per cent) had been disbursed (US $123,111 for UNIDO and US $108,000 for UNEP). The balance of US $120,389 will be disbursed in 2026.

[3] Including refrigerant recovery units, vacuum pumps, recovery cylinders, leak detectors, four-valve manifolds, digital manifold sets and refrigerant scales.

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

12. The following activities will be implemented between June 2026 and June 2027*:*

(a) *Strengthening the legal and regulatory framework***:** Update the regulatory framework by adopting a decree banning HCFC-based equipment, integrating SOPs for handling flammable and hazardous refrigerants into law, and introducing measures to prevent venting and flushing during RAC equipment operations (UNIDO) (US $15,000);

(b) *Improving the capacity of customs to monitor and control HCFCs:* Conduct eight training sessions for 160 customs and enforcement officers (including 32 women) on monitoring and control of HCFCs and related equipment (UNEP) (US $27,500);

(c) *Strengthening the capacity of RAC sector:* Establish and operate the centre of excellence to support promotion of RR, proper refrigerant management, and provide support to SMEs in the refrigeration sector; procure equipment and tools for RR operations[4] for centre of excellence and regional branches of the Association of Refrigeration Professionals of the Niger; procure equipment and tools for vocational schools;[5] conduct one workshop to launch the updated curricula for vocational schools; continue developing the technician certification scheme, train certifiers and pilot the certification process; conduct 12 training sessions for 240 RAC technicians on safe handling of refrigerants and adherence to environmental standards (UNIDO) (US $111,000), (UNEP) (US $57,000);

(d) *Raising awareness among government stakeholders, industries and end-users*: Conduct two awareness-raising campaigns for 60 participants from government institutions and industry focused on promoting compliance with the updated regulatory framework, code of good practices and SOPs, and the provisions for preventing venting and flushing of HCFCs during servicing; conduct two awareness-raising campaigns targeting 60 participants from RAC servicing companies, equipment importers and end users on promoting the adoption of low-GWP alternative refrigerants, benefits of proper RR practices, and the services offered by the centre of excellence once established; develop and disseminate awareness materials including leaflets and posters (UNIDO) (US $20,000); and

(e) *Project coordination and monitoring* (UNIDO) (US $20,000)*:* Project monitoring and implementation activities including national technical consultants (US $11,000), travel (US $3,000) and meetings (US $6,000).

SECRETARIAT'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATION

COMMENTS

Verification report

13. The verification report noted discrepancies between the reported data and the customs data, which was attributed to the reporting format used by the customs authorities, under which imported ODS are recorded under the single category of "freon gases". The verification report recommended the full

[4] Including refrigerant recovery units and stations, vacuum pumps, digital manifolds, electronic scales, leak detector, large and small recovery cylinders, manifold gauge sets and refrigerant transfer hoses and fittings.
[5] Including refrigerant analyzer, recovery stations, digital manifolds, pressure test ramps, recovery cylinders, vacuum gauges, leak detectors, thermometers, vacuum pumps and other training tools (including brazing equipment, portable fire extinguishers, anemometers, safety equipment).

implementation of the 2022 revision of the World Customs Organization's (WCO) Harmonized System (HS) tariff codes for HCFCs and HFCs by the customs authorities. Upon request for clarification, UNIDO indicated that the Niger, as a member of the WCO and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), applies the HS 2022 subheadings for HCFCs and HFCs in its customs clearance system. However, the customs authorities transmit data to the NOU in aggregated form under "freon gases". This was taken into account in the establishment of the electronic single window for foreign trade (GUCE[6]-Niger). UNIDO also indicated that the reported HCFC consumption is based on a methodology that includes issued import authorizations, annual surveys conducted by the NOU with all registered importers and distributors, and cross-checking against customs records. Following the recommendation, the NOU will continue engaging with the customs authorities to facilitate the transmission of import data in disaggregated form by substance. It was further agreed that UNIDO would report on progress in this matter, as part of the request for the third tranche of stage II of the HPMP.

Submission delays

14. On the delay in submission of the second tranche of the HPMP, originally scheduled for 2025, it was explained that this was due to the time required for the completion of the independent verification of HCFC consumption, the delivery and receipt of the shipment of equipment procured, and the change of the national ozone officer (NOO). UNIDO indicated that the progress is now on track, with a new NOO in place and pending procurement processes initiated, and it is expected that second-tranche activities will be completed within the proposed one-year period.

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

Legal framework

15. The Government of the Niger has already issued HCFC import quotas for 2026 at 5.19 ODP tonnes, which is in accordance with the Montreal Protocol control targets.

16. Regarding the planned bans on imports of second-hand HCFC-based equipment by 1 January 2025, the new HCFC-based equipment by 1 January 2026, and the adoption of regulatory measures by 1 January 2025 to prevent HCFC emissions during the installation, servicing, and decommissioning of RAC equipment, UNIDO mentioned that under the first tranche, a national consultant analyzed the legal framework and developed a strategy for the bans and development of regulations. The Government plans to complete these measures by December 2026.

Refrigeration servicing sector

17. The Secretariat enquired about the reasons for the delay in the development of the certification scheme of technicians. UNIDO stated that the delay was due to identifying a qualified French-speaking consultant or firm to implement the certification scheme, within the budget available. Work on the technician certification scheme will continue in the second tranche. UNIDO added that to optimize resources, UNEP plans to group countries together, enabling them to jointly engage consultants or firms, and that this collaborative approach is expected to reduce individual country costs, while ensuring technical

[6] Guichet Unique du Commerce Extérieur

expertise is effectively leveraged across the group. It is expected that the process can be finalized by the end of 2027.

Gender policy implementation

18. In line with decisions 84/92(d) and 90/48(c), the Government of the Niger is taking several measures to implement the Multilateral Fund's policy, and specific efforts were made to encourage and increase women's participation in RAC sector activities. During the first tranche, the participation of women in customs training was 17 per cent and in RAC technicians training was 11 per cent, which is an improvement compared with participation rates in stage I activities. This will be further strengthened during the second tranche. In addition, as part of the provision of tools and equipment under the upcoming tranche, a portion of the resources will be specifically allocated for use by women technicians, as a means of encouraging their participation.

Sustainability of the HCFC phase-out and assessment of risks

19. The sustainability of the HCFC phase-out continues to be supported by the enforcement of the licensing and quota system, the planned bans on imports of HCFC-based equipment, and the implementation of activities under the HPMP. The NOC established for stage I of the HPMP continues to monitor overall implementation of stage II at the national level, including activity and programme planning. The Government will continue to issue and enforce appropriate regulations to ensure the sustainability of HCFC reductions upon completion of the stage. The cooperation with customs through continuous training will be strengthened during the next tranche to ensure improved recording of imports. Some potential risks include procurement delays, enforcement challenges, and the availability of alternative technologies. These risks are planned to be mitigated through monitoring activities, enforcement of regulations, improving RR, and raising awareness on new technologies.

Conclusion

20. The Niger is in compliance with the maximum allowable consumption levels during the reporting period, the disbursement level of funds approved in the previous tranche is above 20 per cent, and significant progress has been achieved during the implementation of the tranche. The ODS import and reporting system is being strengthened to improve data reporting. Pending procurement and delivery of equipment and tools will be completed in 2026 which will further strengthen the refrigerant RR network and training institutions, thereby supporting the sustainability of the HCFC phase-out and facilitating compliance with future reduction targets.

RECOMMENDATION

21. 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 Niger, and further recommends blanket approval of the second tranche of stage II of the HPMP and the corresponding 2026–2027 tranche implementation plan for the Niger at the funding levels shown in the table below, on the understanding that UNIDO will include, as part of the progress report on the implementation of the second tranche of stage II of the HPMP, an update on progress in implementing the recommendations contained in the verification report submitted to the 98th meeting.

	Project title	Project funding (US $)	Support costs (US $)	Implementing agency
(a)	HCFC phase-out management plan (stage II, second tranche)	166,000	11,620	UNIDO
(b)	HCFC phase-out management plan (stage II, second tranche)	84,500	10,985	UNEP