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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
THE MULTILATERAL FUND FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL
Ninety-seventh Meeting
Montreal, 1–5 December 2025
Item 9(c) of the provisional agenda¹

PROJECT PROPOSAL: CONGO (THE)

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

Energy efficiency

- | | | |
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| • Additional activities to maintain energy efficiency for the servicing sector under decision 89/6(b) | UNIDO | Blanket approval |
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¹ UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/97/1

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

1. Stage II of the Congo's HCFC phase-out management plan (HPMP) was approved at the 95th meeting,² to completely phase out HCFC consumption by 2030, at a total cost of US \$650,000, plus agency support costs. As per the Agreement between the Government of the Congo and the Executive Committee, the second tranche of the HPMP is scheduled to be submitted to the second meeting of 2028 by UNEP, as the lead implementing agency, only.

2. On behalf of the Government of the Congo, UNIDO, as the cooperating implementing agency, has submitted a request for funding additional activities to strengthen energy efficiency in the refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) servicing sector and promote the use of energy-efficient, low-global-warming-potential (GWP) refrigerants in line with decisions 89/6(b) and 92/22,³ in the amount of US \$120,000, plus agency support costs of US \$6,634.⁴ The submission includes a description of specific activities, targets, and an implementation plan from January 2026 to December 2027.

Energy efficiency-related activities funded by the Multilateral Fund

3. The Congo does not have a previously approved project to enhance/maintain energy efficiency in RAC equipment. However, awareness-raising on HFC phase-down and energy efficiency improvement in RAC equipment was included under the enabling activities approved at the 80th meeting, and the project preparation for the Kigali HFC implementation plan (KIP), approved at the 91st meeting, included a study of energy efficiency in all relevant sectors. The country's KIP was approved at the 93rd meeting and included activities in the servicing sector to phase down the use of HFCs.⁵

Report on HCFC consumption

4. The Government of the Congo reported a consumption of 4.92 ODP tonnes of HCFCs in 2024, which is 51 per cent below the country's HCFC baseline for compliance. The 2020-2024 HCFC consumption is shown in table 1.

Table 1. HCFC consumption in the Congo (2020-2024 Article 7 data)

HCFC-22	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Baseline
Metric tonnes (mt)	116.25	112.60	101.20	94.60	89.50	184.36
ODP tonnes	6.39	6.19	5.57	5.20	4.92	10.14

5. As reported at the 95th meeting, consumption over the past five years has been steadily decreasing as a result of activities carried out under stage I of the HPMP, in particular due to the successful implementation of a licensing and quota system, the training of customs officers, capacity building for refrigeration technicians, the sensitization of importers, the adoption of alternatives to HCFCs in RAC applications, and the effective application and monitoring of regulations on ozone-depleting substances (ODSs).

² Decision 95/48

³ Decision 92/22 allows for the submission of requests for activities referred to in decision 89/6(b) separately from HCFC phase-out management plan tranche requests, including a revised Agreement between the Government of the Article 5 country concerned and the Executive Committee, on the understanding that those activities were integrated into the ongoing tranche implementation plans.

⁴ As per the letter of 14 October 2025 from the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of the Congo to UNIDO.

⁵ Decision 93/58

Country programme implementation report

6. The Government of the Congo reported HCFC sector consumption data under the 2024 country programme (CP) implementation report that is consistent with the data reported under Article 7 of the Montreal Protocol.

Project description

7. Currently, the Congo has no binding regulations, performance standards, certification schemes, or incentives for energy efficiency in RAC applications. While existing energy policies mention efficiency in broad terms, they lack enforcement mechanisms, sector-specific provisions, and compliance systems. The country also lacks testing capacity, certification, and performance verification for energy-efficient appliances, and institutional frameworks for developing or enforcing energy efficiency standards. The Congo is a member of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), whose role is to promote harmonization by providing the political platform, strategic frameworks, and institutional partnerships that guide member States in aligning their national regulations. The development, adoption, and enforcement of minimum energy performance standards (MEPS) remain the responsibility of each country at the national level.

8. The objective of the project is to support the country in establishing and implementing MEPS and energy labelling for RAC equipment to improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It will address regulatory and institutional gaps, develop standards, and assess their impacts; identify consumer preferences and demand patterns; analyse the supply chain and monitor trends. The project aims to integrate measures into the country's nationally determined contributions (NDCs)⁶ and national policy roadmaps, and to develop domestic testing capacity to support enforcement and compliance.

9. The project will be implemented in coordination with national institutions, including the Ministry of Energy and Hydraulics (MEH), the Ministry of Trade, Supply and Consumption (MCAC), and stakeholders, such as the Oyo Centre of Excellence for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CEO), the Electricity Sector Regulatory Agency (ARSEL), the Congolese Agency for Standardization and Quality agency (ACONOQ), the Congolese Association for Standardization (ACONOR), and regional partners, to contribute to the development of a coherent regional legislative and institutional framework.

10. The description and proposed cost breakdown of activities to maintain energy efficiency in the servicing sector, and their expected outputs are presented in table 2.

Table 2. Activities, expected outputs, and requested funding for the project proposed to maintain energy efficiency for the servicing sector in the Congo

Activity	Expected outputs/performance indicators	Cost as submitted (US \$)	Costs as agreed (US\$)
1. Gap analysis for MEPS implementation			
1.1 Assess barriers to the establishment and enforcement of MEPS; the national ozone unit (NOU) will collaborate with the MEH and the MCAC to identify gaps in policy alignment and institutional coordination, while ARSEL, ACONOQ, and ACONOR will provide sector-specific analysis.	- Assessment report with recommendations for the establishment and enforcement of MEPS - Mapping of the legal and institutional framework governing energy efficiency, and existing testing capabilities and resource needs	10,000	10,000
1.2 Map existing regulatory instruments, testing capabilities and resource needs including a review of relevant legislation, available human and financial resources, data on standards and testing, that will serve as a baseline for defining priorities.			

⁶ NDCs outline the countries' self-defined climate pledges under the Paris Agreement.

Activity	Expected outputs/performance indicators	Cost as submitted (US \$)	Costs as agreed (US\$)
1.3 Establish a national steering committee, chaired by the NOU, to provide strategic oversight of the project and guide the development of MEPS, and organize national consultations with key stakeholders including market actors, consumers, and equipment importers and distributors. The steering committee and stakeholder consultations will have a minimum target of 25 per cent participation of women representatives.	- Establishment of a steering committee to guide the development of MEPS - National stakeholder consultations		
2. Development of MEPS and labelling for refrigerators and air conditioners			
2.1 Provide technical support and guidance to ACONOQ on the design and implementation of MEPS and labelling schemes. 2.2 Conduct a comparative analysis with MEPS in other jurisdictions to promote alignment and facilitate regional harmonization. The Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency for Central Africa (CEREEAC), ECCAS, and countries implementing similar activities in the region will provide inputs to promote alignment and facilitate regional harmonization. 2.3 Draft MEPS and labelling requirements for RAC equipment and define the framework for product certification in line with national market realities while promoting more efficient refrigerators and air conditioners. Labels will include key information such as energy efficiency rating, refrigerant type, GWP, and ODP, where applicable and will undergo consumer testing to ensure clarity and usability.	- Capacity building and hands-on technical guidance to strengthen ACONOQ with a minimum target of 25 per cent participation of women representatives - International and regional MEPS and labelling schemes benchmarked to facilitate regional harmonization - Draft MEPS and labelling requirements, and framework for product certification defined	42,000	42,000
3. Integration into national roadmaps			
3.1 Review existing climate policies and identify opportunities to integrate energy efficiency considerations and MEPS with climate, energy, and environmental frameworks. 3.2 Strengthen the institutional capacity for implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of MEPS in key stakeholders such as the ARSEL, ACONOQ, CEO, and the customs authority.	- Integrate energy efficiency within the NDCs and the roadmap to support national climate and energy objectives - Targeted training delivered under the coordination of the NOU and target a 25 per cent participation from women	15,000	15,000
4. Impact assessment of MEPS and labelling			
4.1 Conduct market surveys to evaluate the energy performance of RAC equipment available nationally and assess the visibility and accuracy of labels, collect data on the life cycle and supply chain of appliances, demand trends, consumer preferences, and the availability of efficient appliances. CEO will provide technical expertise in data collection and analysis to ensure reliability. 4.2 Estimate the impact of MEPS and labelling adoption on energy savings, emissions reductions, electricity consumption projections, and changes in consumer behaviour.	- A report with findings to inform the refinement of MEPS and labelling schemes - A report to be shared with CEREEAC to support regional replication	28,000	0

Activity	Expected outputs/performance indicators	Cost as submitted (US \$)	Costs as agreed (US\$)
5. Laboratory development (as submitted)			
5.1 Prepare terms of reference (TOR) for the establishment of laboratory infrastructure used to test and certify the performance and energy efficiency of RAC equipment.	- A TOR outlining the scope, design, and operational requirements of a new testing laboratory - Development of a regional testing network	25,000	0
5.2 Undertake an analysis to benchmark regional testing protocols and international best practices and ISO7 standards and provide technical guidance to foster the development of a regional testing network.			
5. Awareness raising (as agreed)			
5.1 Develop communication materials (gender sensitive) (brochures, posters, infographics, and digital content) explaining MEPS, labels, and the benefits of energy-efficient appliances, and tailored to different audiences (consumers, technicians, distributors, policymakers).	- A national communication campaign using a variety of materials implemented through multiple channels promoting low-GWP high-efficiency appliances and highlighting cost savings - A national workshop for key stakeholders (government agencies, customs officers, industry associations, retailers and consumer groups) to introduce MEPS and labelling requirements	0	25,000
5.2 Launch national awareness campaigns using multiple channels (radio, television, social media, and public events), explaining the importance of energy labels, highlighting life cycle cost savings and promoting low-GWP, high-efficiency appliances. Partnerships will be established with distributors to display labels prominently and provide in-store information to customers.			
5.3 Organize one national workshop for key stakeholders (with 25 per cent participation from women) to present MEPS and labelling requirements, foster buy-in, and encourage their role as multipliers of awareness.			
Total		120,000	120,000

SECRETARIAT'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATION

COMMENTS

11. The Secretariat reviewed the project proposal in line with decisions 89/6(b) and 92/22 and sought additional information from UNIDO on different activities, including relevant activities under the HPMP and the KIP. UNIDO explained that the implementation of the project will be fully aligned with both the HPMP and the KIP, ensuring synergies and effective use of resources. All three projects will be managed by the same implementation team at both the national and UNIDO levels, to maximize coordination, minimize duplication, and build on the team's knowledge and experience.

12. The project will also generate practical synergies through coordinated activities. The project will be closely integrated with the activities under stage I of the KIP that address demand-side management through the development of labels for refrigerators and air conditioners before they are marketed or displayed. Likewise, the awareness-raising activities under the project will be combined with awareness campaigns implemented under stage II of the HPMP.

13. The project will draw on the expertise of local subject-matter experts to ensure that national knowledge and context-specific insights are fully reflected. It will be implemented in coordination between the NOU and relevant national stakeholders, including ARSEL, ACONOQ, and the CEO; and regional partners such as ECCAS, CEREAC, and countries implementing similar initiatives in the region. In the

⁷ International Organization for Standardization

long term, these efforts could contribute to the development of a regional legislative and institutional framework under ECCAS.

14. The Secretariat enquired about the plans to build on the results of the activity, implemented under stage I of the HPMP, to install 30 R-290-based air-conditioning units in workshops, vocational schools, hotels, and government institutions. UNIDO explained that the units are being used to showcase performance and train technicians on alternative technologies, and that the experience gained will inform the development of MEPS and energy labelling for air conditioners under the present project. This practical knowledge will ensure that the standards and labels developed reflect real performance in local conditions and incorporate technician feedback.

15. Regarding component 5, on laboratory development, the proposal as submitted referred to the preparation of a TOR for the establishment of laboratory infrastructure to test and certify the performance and energy efficiency of RAC equipment. The laboratory framework would be benchmarked against regional practices and ISO standards, and it would be expected that CEREEAC would provide technical guidance to foster the development of a regional testing network. The Secretariat reminded UNEP of decision 95/87(e),⁸ and considering that further guidance is expected to be provided by the Executive Committee, which would need to be followed before preparatory work in this area can be undertaken, it was agreed that the activity would be replaced with awareness-raising activities, as shown in table 2 above.

16. The Secretariat noted that the proposed activities fall within the scope referred to in subparagraphs (b)(ii), (iii), and (v) of decision 89/6. Through the activities to be undertaken, the project will support the country in establishing and implementing MEPS and energy labelling for RAC equipment to improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The project will help the RAC sector transition to low-GWP alternatives by identifying and addressing policy gaps and raising awareness of the benefits of low-GWP and energy-efficient technologies. It will develop detailed reports to inform capacity-building and awareness activities, improve the legal framework, and promote ozone- and climate-friendly refrigerants.

Gender policy implementation

17. The energy efficiency activities will be integrated into the implementation of stage II of the HPMP. During implementation of this project, the NOU will ensure women's participation in stakeholder consultations, workshops, and capacity-building initiatives, with targeted outreach to women professionals in the RAC sector and relevant areas of the Government.

Updated Agreement

18. In view of the inclusion of funding for additional activities to maintain energy efficiency in the refrigeration servicing sector and the accordingly revised funding schedule, the Agreement between the Government of the Congo and the Executive Committee has been updated. Specifically, Appendix 2-A has been revised, and paragraph 17 has been added to indicate that the updated Agreement supersedes that reached at the 95th meeting by decision 95/48, as contained in annex I to the present document. The updated Agreement will be appended to the final report of the 97th meeting.

⁸ The decision requested the Secretariat to prepare, for its consideration at the 97th meeting, a paper that would: (i) elaborate the specific functions for both centres of excellence for sustainable cooling and testing centres for energy efficiency; (ii) assess sustainable business models for regional centres; (iii) assess potential duplication with activities funded under HPMPs and KIPs, as well as with existing centres; (iv) identify potential opportunities to use existing centres and mechanisms already in place for testing the energy efficiency of equipment.

Conclusion

19. This proposal will enhance coordination and collaboration among the different authorities and institutions involved in energy efficiency in the country, and other national stakeholders, to ensure appropriate consideration of low-GWP refrigerants during the development of MEPS, labelling systems, and other energy efficiency related policies and plans. The proposed project is expected to assist the country in the development and implementation of MEPS and labelling, and in strengthening the institutional capacity for the implementation, monitoring and enforcement of MEPS in key stakeholders such as ARSEL, ACONOQ, and CEO, and the customs authority. The project will contribute to the overall objectives of the HPMP and KIP and help the country sustain the reductions achieved in HCFCs while adopting more energy-efficient, low-GWP RAC technologies. Awareness will also be raised among consumers, industry associations, distributors and retailers on the linkage between HCFC phase-out, HFC phase-down, energy efficiency, and the climate and cost savings benefits of low-GWP high-efficiency appliances.

RECOMMENDATION

20. The Fund Secretariat recommends blanket approval of the project for additional activities for the introduction of alternatives to HCFCs with low-global-warming-potential for maintaining energy efficiency in the refrigeration and air-conditioning servicing sector in the Congo, and the corresponding 2026-2027 implementation plan, at the funding level shown in the table below, on the understanding that the Fund Secretariat has updated the Agreement between the Government of the Congo and the Executive Committee, as contained in annex I to the present document, specifically Appendix 2-A, to reflect the revised funding level owing to the inclusion of funding for additional activities to maintain energy efficiency in the refrigeration servicing sector; and paragraph 17, which has been added to indicate that the updated Agreement supersedes that reached at the 95th meeting by decision 95/48.

Project title		Project funding (US \$)	Support costs (US \$)	Implementing agency
(a)	Additional activities for the introduction of alternatives to HCFCs with low GWP and for enhancing energy efficiency in the RAC servicing sector	120,000	6,634	UNIDO

Annex I

TEXT TO BE INCLUDED IN THE UPDATED AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CONGO AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE MULTILATERAL FUND FOR THE REDUCTION IN CONSUMPTION OF HYDROCHLOROFLUOROCARBONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STAGE II OF THE HCFC PHASE-OUT MANAGEMENT PLAN

(Relevant changes are in bold font for ease of reference)

17. This updated Agreement supersedes the Agreement reached between the Government of the Congo and the Executive Committee at the 95th meeting of the Executive Committee.

APPENDIX 2-A: THE TARGETS, AND FUNDING

Row	Particulars	2024	2025	2026- 2027	2028	2029	2030	Total
1.1	Montreal Protocol reduction schedule of Annex C, Group I substances (ODP tonnes)	6.59	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	0.00	n/a
1.2	Maximum allowable total consumption of Annex C, Group I substances (ODP tonnes)	6.59	3.29	3.29	3.29	3.29	0.00	n/a
2.1	Lead IA (UNEP) agreed funding (US \$)	208,000	0	0	123,000	0	104,000	435,000
2.2	Support costs for Lead IA (US \$)	27,040	0	0	15,990	0	13,520	56,550
2.3	Cooperating IA (UNIDO) agreed funding (US \$)	142,000	120,000	0	0	0	73,000	335,000
2.4	Support costs for Cooperating IA (US \$)	12,780	6,634	0	0	0	4,036	23,450
3.1	Total agreed funding (US \$)	350,000	120,000	0	123,000	0	177,000	770,000
3.2	Total support costs (US \$)	39,820	6,634	0	15,990	0	17,556	80,000
3.3	Total agreed costs (US \$)	389,820	126,634	0	138,990	0	194,556	850,000