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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
THE MULTILATERAL FUND FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL
Ninety-first Meeting
Montreal, 5-9 December 2022
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:

Phase-out

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

¹ UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/91/1

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

Congo (the)

(I) PROJECT TITLE	AGENCY	MEETING APPROVED	CONTROL MEASURE
HCFC phase-out plan (stage I)	UNEP (lead), UNIDO	63 rd	35% phase-out by 2020

(II) LATEST ARTICLE-7 DATA (Annex C Group I)	Year: 2021	6.19 ODP tonnes
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(III) LATEST COUNTRY PROGRAMME SECTORAL DATA (ODP tonnes)								Year: 2021	
Chemical	Aerosol	Foam	Fire fighting	Refrigeration		Solvent	Process agent	Lab use	Total sector consumption
				Manufacturing	Servicing				
HCFC-22					6.19				6.19

(IV) CONSUMPTION DATA (ODP tonnes)			
2009-2010 baseline:	10.14	Starting point for sustained aggregate reductions:	10.14
CONSUMPTION ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING			
Already approved:	3.55	Remaining:	6.59

(V) ENDORSED BUSINESS PLAN		2022
UNEP	ODS phase-out (ODP tonnes)	0.36
	Funding (US \$)	39,550

(VI) PROJECT DATA			2011	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2022	Total	
Montreal Protocol consumption limits (ODP tonnes)			n/a	10.14	10.14	9.13	9.13	9.13	9.13	9.13	6.59	6.59	n/a	
Maximum allowable consumption (ODP tonnes)			n/a	10.14	10.14	9.13	9.13	9.13	9.13	9.13	6.59	6.59	n/a	
Funding agreed in principle (US \$)	UNEP	Project costs	45,000	30,000	0	0	40,000	0	25,000	0	35,000	0	175,000	
		Support costs	5,850	3,900	0	0	5,200	0	3,250	0	4,550	0	22,750	
	UNIDO	Project costs	100,000	0	0	0	75,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	175,000
		Support costs	9,000	0	0	0	6,750	0	0	0	0	0	0	15,750
Funds approved by ExCom (US \$)		Project costs	145,000	30,000	0	0	115,000	0	0	25,000*	0	0	315,000	
		Support costs	14,850	3,900	0	0	11,950	0	0	3,250*	0	0	0	33,950
Total funds recommended for approval at this meeting (US \$)		Project costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	35,000*	35,000	
		Support costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,550*	4,550	

* The fourth and fifth (final) tranches should have been submitted in 2018 and 2020, respectively.

Secretariat's recommendation:	Blanket approval
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. On behalf of the Government of the Congo, 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 \$35,000, plus agency support costs of US \$4,550 for UNEP only.² The submission includes a progress report on the implementation of the fourth tranche, and the tranche implementation plan for 2023.

Report on HCFC consumption

2. The Government of the Congo reported a consumption of 6.19 ODP tonnes of HCFC in 2021, which is 39 per cent below the HCFC baseline for compliance. The 2017-2021 HCFC consumption is shown in table 1.

Table 1. HCFC consumption in the Congo (2017-2021 Article 7 data)

HCFC-22	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Baseline
Metric tonnes (mt)	139.30	131.40	125.20	116.25	112.60	184.36
ODP tonnes	7.66	7.23	6.89	6.39	6.19	10.14

3. The overall HCFC consumption follows a decreasing trend, mainly due to the implementation of HPMP activities relating to monitoring and reporting of HCFCs, training and capacity building of service sector and replacement of the existing population of refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) equipment using HCFCs with equipment using alternatives such as HFC-134a, R-404A and R-410A.

Country programme (CP) implementation report

4. The Government of the Congo reported HCFC sector consumption data under the 2021 CP implementation report that 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. The HCFC import/export licensing of ODS in the Congo is covered under the Regulation Framework Decree of 13 May 2002, which controls the import, export and re-export of ODS and equipment containing ODS (including HCFC). This is further strengthened with a sub-regional regulation established by the Communauté Economique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale (CEMAC) in November 2004, which aims at harmonization of the regulations relating to the importation, marketing, use and re-exportation of ODS and their containers. The CEMAC regulations also control HCFC and HCFC-based equipment.

Refrigeration servicing sector

6. The following activities have been conducted:
- (a) Four training workshops for 50 customs and trade officers on the identification and control of HCFCs and HCFC-based equipment as well as illegal trade; and
 - (b) Three training workshops for 78 refrigeration technicians in safe handling of hydrocarbon technologies and good refrigeration practices.

² As per the letter of 9 September 2022 from the Ministère de l'Environnement du Développement du Durable et du Bassin of the Congo to the Secretariat.

Project implementation and monitoring

7. The national ozone unit (NOU) monitored the effective implementation of all HPMP activities and collected accurate data with the assistance of two consultants (one refrigeration and one customs expert). The expenditures as of date amount to US \$42,000 for national consultants, US \$2,800 for travel and US \$5,200 for meetings; this is lower than the funding allocated for project implementation and monitoring.

Level of fund disbursement

8. As of September 2022, of the US \$313,626 approved so far, US \$293,626 had been disbursed (US \$120,000 for UNEP and US \$173,626 for UNIDO), as shown in table 2. The balance of US \$20,000 relating to the third tranche will be disbursed and the tranche will be financially closed by February 2023.³

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

Tranche		UNEP	UNIDO	Total	Disbursement rate (%)
First	Approved	45,000	98,626*	143,626	100
	Disbursed	45,000	98,626	143,626	
Second	Approved	30,000	0	30,000	100
	Disbursed	30,000	0	30,000	
Third	Approved	40,000	75,000	115,000	83
	Disbursed	20,000**	75,000	95,000	
Fourth	Approved	25,000	0	25,000	100
	Disbursed	25,000	0	25,000	
Total	Approved	140,000	173,626	313,626	94
	Disbursed	120,000	173,626	293,626	
	Balance	20,000	0	20,000	

*After adjustment of balances returned to the 79th meeting.

** The balance would be disbursed, and the project would be financially closed by February 2023.

Implementation plan for the fifth and final tranche of the HPMP

9. The following activities will be implemented between January 2023 and December 2023:
- (a) Four training workshops for 80 customs officers on the identification and control of HCFCs and HCFC-based equipment, by the trainers trained during the third tranche (US \$12,000);
 - (b) Four training workshops for 100 RAC technicians on recovery and recycling of HCFCs and safe handling of hydrocarbon-refrigerants (US \$18,000); and
 - (c) Project monitoring (US \$5,000): Recruitment of two national consultants (one refrigeration expert and one customs expert) (US \$3,000) in addition to the existing NOU team to assist in the monitoring of the effective implementation of all HPMP activities and collection of accurate data; travel (US \$1,200); and meetings (US \$800).

³ UNEP explained that this was mainly due to the utilisation of the funds from the fourth tranche before the balance from the third tranche was fully disbursed.

SECRETARIAT'S COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATION

COMMENTS

Reasons for delay in submission of the fifth tranche

10. The Secretariat requested additional information on the reasons for delay in the submission of the present tranche, noting that, as per decision 88/29(b), the tranche was to be submitted to the 90th meeting. UNEP explained that this was mainly due to administrative delays in the appointment of the new National Ozone Officer (NOO) after the previous NOO had retired, and delays in administrative approval processes which resulted in delays in project implementation and reporting.

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

Legal framework

11. The Government of the Congo has already issued HCFC import quotas for 2022 at 5.50 ODP tonnes, which is lower than the Montreal Protocol control targets.

Completion of stage I

12. The completion date for stage I of the HPMP for the Congo was originally planned for 31 December 2021. At the 88th meeting, the Government of the Congo submitted a request for extension of the completion date of stage I to 31 December 2023 due to delays in implementation resulting from the COVID-19-related restrictions. Subsequently, the Executive Committee *inter alia* allowed the country, on an exceptional basis, to continue implementation of the outstanding activities related to stage I and requested that a detailed implementation plan, with the request for the remaining tranche be submitted to the 91st meeting (decisions 88/29 and 90/23). In view of the delays in submission of the fourth tranche, extending the Agreement of stage I to the requested date would allow the country to complete the remaining activities as contained in the revised action plan.

Gender policy implementation⁴

13. The Government, UNEP and UNIDO are fully committed to implementing the gender policy of the Multilateral Fund in line with decisions 84/92(d) and 90/48(c). The NOU will implement measures for gender mainstreaming and encourage women to participate in the training activities undertaken in stages I and II of the HPMP. The NOU will continue to take steps to collect gender-disaggregated data. Further, gender mainstreaming aspects have already been included in the Government's programmes as a policy. These steps will progressively strengthen gender mainstreaming while implementing the HPMP in the country.

Sustainability of the HCFC phase-out and assessment of risks

14. The Government of the Congo continues to implement its import/export control policies for controlling HCFC consumption in line with the Montreal Protocol and its HPMP Agreement targets. During stage I of the HPMP, the training centres in Brazzaville and Pointe Noire were equipped with training equipment, that would facilitate continued training and capacity building of service technicians. Training of customs and enforcement officers undertaken in stage I, which would be further augmented in stage II, would help in controlling and monitoring HCFC consumption in the country. UNEP continues to provide

⁴ In line with decision 84/92(d), decision 90/48(c) encouraged bilateral and implementing agencies to continue ensuring that the operational gender mainstreaming policy was applied to all projects, taking into consideration the specific activities presented in table 2 of document UNEP/OzL.Pro/ExCom/90/37.

support to the new NOU for ensuring timely implementation of stage I and finalisation of preparation of stage II that is expected to be submitted in 2023; these actions are expected to mitigate risks of project implementation delays faced in the past. Despite the implementation challenges due to constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, UNEP informed that the country has responded to the challenges through the adoption of online meetings and training workshops, where feasible. During stage II, the Government is also planning to implement regulations for the certification of technicians and for a ban on the import of HCFC-based equipment and of HCFC-141b (pure) and contained in pre-blended polyol. A combination of the above measures is expected to result in the sustainable phase-out of HCFCs in the country.

Conclusion

15. The Government of the Congo has reduced its consumption of HCFCs to 6.19 ODP tonnes in 2021 which is 39 per cent below the HCFC baseline for compliance and 6 per cent below the Agreement target for that year. The activities relating to the service sector and customs and enforcement training are under implementation. Although challenges relating to the appointment of the new NOO and to the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in delays in the completion of activities, the country has progressed in implementing stage I of its HPMP. The disbursement of funds up to the fourth tranche has reached 94 per cent. To complete implementation of stage I activities that were delayed due to administrative challenges and constraints related to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the country has requested an extension of the date of completion to 31 December 2023. The country plans to submit stage II of the HPMP at the 93rd meeting of the Executive Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

16. The Fund Secretariat recommends that the Executive Committee:

- (a) Take note of the progress report on the implementation of the fourth tranche of stage I of the HCFC phase-out management plan (HPMP) for the Congo; and
- (b) Approve, on an exceptional basis, given delays in implementing phase-out activities, and noting that no further extension of project implementation would be requested, the extension of the date of completion of stage I of the HPMP for the Congo to 31 December 2023.

17. The Fund Secretariat further recommends blanket approval of the fifth and final tranche of stage I of the HPMP for the Congo, and the corresponding 2023 tranche implementation plan, at the funding level shown in the table below.

	Project title	Project funding (US \$)	Support costs (US \$)	Implementing agency
(a)	HCFC phase-out management plan (stage I, fifth tranche)	35,000	4,550	UNEP