

HFCs in the Copenhagen Deal

Greenpeace Position Paper

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Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) have been increasingly used in the last decade or so as alternative refrigerants to ozone-damaging CFCs, which are now banned under the Montreal Protocol. Unfortunately, although considered ozone-friendly, HFCs are extremely potent greenhouse gases.

HFCs have a very short life in the atmosphere, so their elimination would have an immediate and positive effect on the global climate. Instead, HFC emissions are a rapidly growing threat as demand for refrigeration in developing countries increases and HCFCs, which are also being used as CFC substitutes, undergo an accelerated phase-out.

The most recent peer-reviewed science shows that, even if global CO₂ emissions are reduced enough to keep global temperature increase below 2°C, doing nothing about HFCs means they will be responsible for the equivalent of 28-45% of CO₂ emissions by 2050.¹

The good news is that HFC-free alternatives for most applications are tried, tested and ready to go.²

Greenpeace position

1. HFC phase-out by 2020

Phasing out HFCs is a crucial step in saving the planet from climate catastrophe. HFCs must therefore be phased out in both industrialised and developing countries by 2020.

This should be synchronised with the Montreal Protocol's HCFC phase-out schedule in industrialised countries. This will clearly signal that HFCs have no future and will provide incentives to stop using them as a substitute for HCFCs and move directly to sustainable alternatives.

2. Phase-out must be coordinated between the UNFCCC and the Montreal Protocol

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Montreal Protocol both have important collaborative roles to play in the phase-out of HFCs. Both bodies may require adjustments to enable the collaboration needed. A clause in the text currently being negotiated under the Climate Convention that enables the Montreal Protocol to take action to reduce HFC production and consumption is a key step in establishing this close cooperation.

¹ Velders et al. (2009): Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, vol.106 no.27 p.10949

² Greenpeace International (2009) '*Cool Technologies Report*' available at www.greenpeace.org/usa/assets/binaries/cool-technology-report-2009; and Greenpeace International (2009) '*HFCs: A growing threat to the climate*', available at www.greenpeace.org/hfcs

3. HFC emissions should remain the responsibility of the UNFCCC

- HFCs should remain within the 'basket' of gases currently regulated under the UNFCCC and an HFC phase-out must be incorporated in the Copenhagen agreement.
- HFC emissions must remain included in the greenhouse gas emissions inventories of industrialised countries.
- Developing countries should register their HFC restriction and phase-out policies and measures as part of their Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs). Industrialised countries must provide the necessary funding for the implementation of NAMAs.

4. Montreal Protocol to implement the phase-out of consumption and production of HFCs

The Montreal Protocol should facilitate the phase out of production and consumption of HFCs around the world, providing the necessary funding, technology development and capacity building.

HFCs were introduced as direct substitutes to ozone-depleting substances and are used in exactly the same applications. The Montreal Protocol therefore has the relevant technical expertise, funding channels and global infrastructure to make it a key player in an HFC phase-out. It also has a moral responsibility to help phase out HFCs given its role in introducing them to the market.

5. Action to prevent emissions from banked F-gases

Greenpeace also calls for financial resources to be secured by the international community for the establishment of a global network for recapturing and safe destruction of ozone-depleting substances and HFCs stored in products and equipment. These so-called 'banks' of CFCs, HCFCs and HFCs contain greenhouse gases equivalent to many billions of tonnes of CO₂ that will otherwise be inevitably released into the atmosphere.