



Green Deal: Phasing down fluorinated greenhouse gases and ozone depleting substances

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The European Commission has today proposed two new Regulations to more tightly control fluorinated greenhouse gases (F-gases) and ozone depleting substances (ODS). The adoption of these regulations would represent a significant step towards limiting global temperature rise in line with the Paris Agreement. The F-gas proposal will also contribute to reducing emissions by at least 55% by 2030 and making Europe climate-neutral by 2050. Both proposals together could bring about a total reduction in the EU's greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) of 490 Mt (CO₂ equivalent) by 2050. For comparison, this is slightly higher than the total annual greenhouse gas emissions of France in 2019.

Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal said: *"For decades the European Union has had the world's most ambitious policy on fluorinated gases and Ozone Depleting Substances. While existing laws have been successful, science urges us to go further and faster now. Making climate-friendly technologies more widely available will help us reach the EU's long-term climate goals and encourage countries outside Europe to reduce their F-gas and use of Ozone Depleting Substances too."*

F-gases and ODS are highly potent, human-made greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming when released into the atmosphere, often several thousand times stronger than carbon dioxide (CO₂). ODS damage the ozone layer that protects the Earth against dangerous ultraviolet radiation from the sun. Both types of substance groups have or used to have practical applications in everyday life, for example in refrigeration, air conditioning, insulation, fire protection, power lines and as aerosol propellants. While existing EU legislation has already limited the use and emissions of these gases significantly, the regulations proposed today will reduce emissions even further and provide incentives to use climate-friendly alternatives.

Proposal for a new F-gas Regulation

At EU level, F-gases currently account for 2.5 % of total GHG emissions. The strengthened [F-gas proposal](#) will save the equivalent of 40 million tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions by 2030, beyond the expected reduction under current legislation, reaching total additional savings equivalent to 310 million tons of CO₂ by 2050.

- **Delivering higher ambition:** The proposal would tighten the quota system for hydrofluorocarbons (HFC phase-down), reducing the potential climate impact of new HFCs coming onto the EU market by 98% between 2015 and 2050. It also introduces new restrictions to make sure that F-gases would only be used in new equipment where no suitable alternatives are available. For example, SF₆, the most potent greenhouse gas, will be phased out in all new equipment for electrical transmission ("switchgear") by 2031.
- **Improved enforcement and implementation:** The proposal would make it easier for customs and surveillance authorities to control imports and exports, cracking down on trade of illegal F-gases and equipment. In addition, penalties will become harsher and more standardized. The quota system will be limited to genuine gas traders through stricter registration rules and the introduction of a fixed quota price. The number of engineers qualified to handle climate-friendly equipment in Europe would increase as Member States would be required to expand their certification and training programs to cover climate-friendly technologies replacing or reducing F-gas use.
- **More comprehensive monitoring:** A broader range of substances and activities would be covered and the procedures for reporting and verifying data would be improved.
- **Ensuring compliance with the Montreal Protocol:** The F-gas proposal would abolish certain exemptions and bring the EU's HFC phase-down fully into line with the Montreal Protocol.

Proposal for a new ODS Regulation

By introducing [new measures](#) targeting products in which ODS were legally used in the past, the EU wants to prevent the equivalent of 180 million tonnes of CO₂ and 32,000 tonnes of ozone depleting potential (ODP) emissions by 2050.

- **Higher ambition:** Most additional emission savings would be achieved by requiring ODS to be recovered or destroyed from insulation foams when buildings are renovated or demolished.
- **Streamlining:** Industry and authorities would benefit from cost savings due to a modernised licensing system and the end of obsolete quota and registration requirements.
- **Improved enforcement and monitoring:** Measures would be introduced to fight illegal activities similar to those proposed in the F-gas Regulation. The reporting would be extended to cover more substances and activities to better understand the remaining trade of ODS, their emissions and any future risks.

Background

The Montreal Protocol of the Vienna Convention on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was adopted in 1987 and established a global phase-out schedule for production and consumption of nearly 100 ozone depleting substances. The EU and its Member States are Parties to the Protocol and have phased out the different groups of ODS according to schedule.

In 2016 the Parties to the Montreal Protocol also decided to regulate a group of F-gases, hydrofluorocarbons, even though they are not ozone depleting. The reason for this so-called Kigali Amendment was a serious concern about a steeply growing use of hydrofluorocarbons and their resulting climate impact.

The EU has put effective legislation in place. The current [ODS Regulation EC No 1005/2009](#) generally prohibits production, trade and use of ODS while exempting a few specified uses. Many ODS were phased-out in the Union years ahead of the global schedule agreed under the Montreal Protocol. The ODS Regulation also goes beyond the Protocol by limiting trade and use of products and equipment with ODS.

The current [F-gases Regulation EU No 517/2014](#) sought to reduce emissions from fluorinated greenhouse gases and to facilitate a global agreement to phase down hydrofluorocarbons, which was adopted with the Kigali amendment to the Montreal Protocol in 2019. The F-gases typically replaced ODS when they were prohibited.

For More Information

[Questions and answers on the F-gas and ODS proposals](#)

[Proposal for a Regulation on F-gas](#)

[Impact assessment and evaluation: F-gas Regulation](#)

[Policy page: Fluorinated greenhouse gases \(europa.eu\)](#)

[Proposal for a Regulation on ODS](#)

[Impact assessment and evaluation: ODS Regulation](#)

[Policy page: Protection of the ozone layer \(europa.eu\)](#)

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