



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Progress by innovation



SUSTAINABLE COOLING FORUM

Rising to the Global Challenge

8-10 April 2026 | Vienna, Austria

SIDE EVENTS PROGRAMME

SIDE EVENT

Promotion of Natural Refrigerants in the Cooling Industry

THURSDAY - 9 APRIL 2026

Time: 11:30 – 13:30

Venue: Prinz Eugen Saal, Hofburg Palace, Vienna, Austria

AGENDA

11:30 – 11:50 OPENING REMARKS

Moderator: Mr. Alois Mhlanga, *Director of Climate Innovation and Montreal Protocol Division, UNIDO*

- Mr. Ciyong Zou, *Deputy to the Director General and Managing Director, UNIDO*
- Mr. Paul Krajnik, *Deputy Director, Directorate General of the Environment and Circular Economy, Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry*
- Ms. Wang Feng, *Director, Department of Atmospheric Environment, Ministry of Ecology and Environment, China*
- Mr. Alessandro Giuliano Peru, *Directorate-General for European and International Affairs and Sustainable Finance, Ministry of Environment and Energy Security, Italy*

11:50 – 12:10 TECHNICAL PRESENTATIONS

Moderator: Mr. Yunrui Zhou, *UNIDO*

- **Standards and Industrial Transformation for the Adoption of Nature Refrigerants**
Mr. Chen Jianming, *Senior Manager, China Household Electrical Appliances Association*
- **European Best Practices in Scaling the Adoption of Nature Refrigerants**
Mr. Andreas Klaudus, *CEO and Co-Founder, Austrian Academy of Refrigeration Technology*

12:10 – 12:50 PANEL DISCUSSION

Scaling up Natural Refrigerants: Challenges, Opportunities and Enabling Conditions

Moderator: Mr. Yunrui Zhou, *UNIDO*

- Ms. Xiaoyan Li, *Senior Program Manager, Division of Montreal Protocol Implementation, Foreign Economic Cooperation Office, Ministry of Environmental Protection, China*
- Mr. Alfonso William Mauro, *Refrigeration and Heat Pumps Professor, Federico II University of Naples*
- Mr. Harald Eroes, *CEO and Co-Founder, Austrian Academy of Refrigeration Technology*
- Mr. Baolong Wang, *Professor, Department of Architecture, Tsinghua University*

12:50 – 13:25 INDUSTRY CASE STUDIES

Moderator: Mr. Yunrui Zhou, *UNIDO*

- **Presentation from Midea**
Mr. Gao Hao, *R290 RAC Development Manager, Midea*
- **Presentation from Haier**
Mr. Ren Tao, *Director, Haier*
- **Presentation from Moon-Tech**
Ms. Ju Chengcheng, *Deputy Director, Moon-Tech*
- **Questions and Answers**

13:25 – 13:30 CLOSING REMARKS

- Ms. Liazzat Rabbiosi, *Chief, Montreal Protocol Unit, CMP, UNIDO*

SIDE EVENT

Empowering Women and Youth in Sustainable Cooling: The UNIDO Charity KPABEP Scholarship Programme

THURSDAY - 9 APRIL 2026

Time: 16:00 – 17:00

Venue: Prinz Eugen Saal, Hofburg Palace, Vienna, Austria

Session Background

Cooling is increasingly recognized as a critical adaptation measure for human health, food security, and productivity. Yet access to sustainable cooling—and to the skills needed to deliver it—remains highly unequal, particularly for women and youth in developing countries. At the same time, implementation of the Montreal Protocol and the Kigali Amendment requires a new generation of qualified refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) professionals supported by strong institutional and policy frameworks.

This side-event will highlight the UNIDO Charity KPABEP Scholarship Programme as a practical example of how investing in women's education and leadership can address both the cooling access gap and workforce needs. The programme supports young women from Nigeria in pursuing studies, research, and careers in sustainable cooling and climate-friendly technologies, contributing to inclusive and future-ready national capacity.

Featuring perspectives from UNIDO's Montreal Protocol Unit, UNIDO's Gender Unit, the National Ozone Unit, a representative from Femmes Chefs d'Entreprises Mondiales (FCEM), and scholarship recipients, the session will illustrate how targeted capacity-building initiatives advance gender equality and women's leadership in the cooling sector, as well as effective implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

Objectives

- Highlight the role of the UNIDO Charity KPABEP Scholarship Programme in empowering women in sustainable cooling sectors
- Demonstrate how investing in youth and women's education strengthens national capacity to implement the Montreal Protocol and the Kigali Amendment
- Showcase perspectives from national stakeholders, scholarship recipients, the private sector, and UNIDO on inclusive capacity-building
- Promote gender-responsive approaches to workforce development in the cooling sector
- Identify opportunities to replicate and scale similar education and capacity-building initiatives

AGENDA

16:00 - 16:05 INTRODUCTION OF THE SESSION

- Mr. Alois Mhlanga, *Director of Climate Innovation and Montreal Protocol Division, UNIDO*

16:05 - 16:15 OPENING REMARKS

- Mr. Ciyong Zou, *Deputy Director General and Managing Director, UNIDO*
- H.E. Mr. Balarabe Abbas Lawal, *Minister of Environment, Nigeria*

16:15 - 16:20 VIDEO SHOWCASE/LAUNCH

Introduced by Oluyomi Banjo, *UNIDO*

16:20 - 16:40 PANEL DISCUSSION

Empowering Women through Education and Capacity-Building in Sustainable Cooling

- Empowering women and youth in STEM and the cooling sector
- Building national expertise through education and research
- Integrating gender-responsive approaches into Montreal Protocol capacity-building initiatives
- Opportunities for expanding educational partnerships and leadership pathways for women and youth

Moderator: Ms. Irma Lizde, *UNIDO*

- Mr. Oluyomi Banjo, *Industrial Development Officer, UNIDO*
- Mr. Idris Abdullahi, *National Ozone Officer, Nigeria*
- Ms. Carolina Gonzalez-Mueller, *Industrial Development Officer and Gender Coordinator, UNIDO*
- Ms. Kalenebari Kbapep, *KPABEP Scholarship Holder*
- Ms. Almut Böhling, *Femmes Chefs d'Entreprises Mondiales (FCEM)*

16:40 - 16:50 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

16:50 - 17:00 KEY TAKEAWAYS & CLOSING REMARKS

- Ms. Liazzat Rabbiosi, *Chief, Montreal Protocol Unit, CMP, UNIDO*

SIDE EVENT

Regional Initiatives to Enabling Energy Efficient Cooling

THURSDAY - 9 APRIL 2026

Time: 17:15 – 18:15

Venue: Prinz Eugen Saal, Hofburg Palace, Vienna, Austria

Session Background

Heating and cooling account for approximately 50 per cent of global final energy use, with a large share in industry and construction sectors. Demand cooling in the Global South, especially in Africa, is surging due to population growth, rapid urbanization, rising incomes, and increasing temperatures, often met by low-performing energy-efficient heating, refrigerating and air-conditioning equipment and high global warming potential (GWP) refrigerants .

The Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC), supported by UNIDO since 2010, currently includes 10 operational centres covering some 120 countries, 40 of 45 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and 35 of 39 Small Island Developing States (SIDS), influencing the energy futures of roughly 2.2 billion consumers. Regional centres in Africa (RCREEE, ECREEE, SACREEE, EACREEE, CEREEAC) have developed Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) for electric appliances and components (lighting, refrigeration, and air conditioning), testing infrastructure, labelling schemes and regional cooling initiatives. Many of these initiatives have been supported by the Energy Efficiency for Sustainable Livelihoods in Africa (EELA), a UNIDO Programme aimed at driving market transformation towards cleaner, more resilient, and inclusive energy markets in Africa. By promoting and accelerating the market for affordable, high-performing energy-efficient technologies and services, EELA is enhancing livelihoods and sustainability.

Objectives

- Present regional policy and regulatory initiatives for efficient cooling in Africa, including the development of MEPS for air conditioning and refrigeration.
- Showcase how the GN SEC centres support countries in implementing these frameworks nationally, including for cooling appliances and refrigeration and air-conditioning equipment.
- Explore opportunities to link Montreal Protocol implementation, regional energy efficiency work and International Vienna Energy and Climate Forum (IVECF)'s country implementation track, with a focus on and the Least Developed Countries LDCs and transitioning economies.

AGENDA

17:15 - 17:20 WELCOME REMARKS

- Mr. Alois Mhlanga, *Director of Climate Innovation and Montreal Protocol Division, UNIDO*

17:20 - 17:25 INTRODUCTORY PRESENTATION

- GN-SEC centres and their focus on energy efficiency and MEPS development in Africa
Martin Lugmayr, *UNIDO*

17:25 - 18:00 PANEL DISCUSSION

Panel discussion with representatives from African regional centres and a centre from Central Asia, the Multilateral Fund (MLF) Secretariat and UNIDO

- Regional MEPS and compliance frameworks for cooling equipment.
- Integration of cooling into regional and national energy efficiency strategies and action plans.
- Testing and quality infrastructure initiatives (laboratories, certification, labelling).
- Replicating the African experience in other regions.
- Financing models for sustainable regional cooling initiatives.

Moderator: Gentjan Sema, *UNIDO*

- Mr. Ayman Eltalouny, *MLF Secretariat*
- Mr. Readlay Makaliki, *SACREEE / EELA Programme*
- Ms. Nadia Chioukh, *RCREEE (Arab Region)*
- Ms. Aysel Yagubova, *CECECO (ECO / Central Asia Region)*

18:00 - 18:10 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

18:10 - 18:15 SUMMARY AND WAY FORWARD ON OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW JOINT PROGRAMMES

- Oluyomi Banjo, *UNIDO*