

**EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA (ECA)
MONTREAL PROTOCOL AWARD FOR
CUSTOMS AND ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS
(5th edition – 2019-2020)**

**Report on seizures and informal
prior-informed consent (iPIC) consultations**



Acknowledgments

This report has been prepared by UNEP Law Division OzonAction for the virtual ceremony of the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Montreal Protocol Award for Customs and Enforcement Officers (5th edition) on Wednesday, 29 March 2023. It is based on the cases reported by the awardees and the supporting documents provided. The award scheme is part of the work programme of the UNEP Law Division's Regional Montreal Protocol Network for Europe and Central Asia (ECA network).

UNEP is grateful for the valuable contributions of the award-winning organizations and individuals and highly appreciates their outstanding efforts and exemplary dedication towards the enforcement of trade provisions under the Montreal Protocol.

Conducting the series of award schemes would not have been possible without the continuous support by our partners, the World Customs Organization and the Ozone Secretariat who reviewed and validated the case descriptions.

Czech Republic had funded the "ECA enforcement network" back in 2009 under which the first ECA enforcement meetings were launched and the ECA award scheme initiated. The recent editions of the award are part of UNEP's Compliance Assistance Programme funded by the Multilateral Fund. We are grateful to our partners and supporters.

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**5th EDITION OF THE EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA
MONTREAL PROTOCOL AWARD
FOR CUSTOMS AND ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS (2019-2020)**

Nominations of Customs and Enforcement Officers from **Bulgaria, China, France, Georgia, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Lithuania, Malaysia, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan** as well as the **European Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and the European FluoroCarbons Technical Committee (EFCTC)** have been validated by the World Customs Organization, the Ozone Secretariat and UNEP Law Division's OzonAction Programme. The awardees shall receive the prestigious Montreal Protocol medals and certificates in recognition of their strong



commitment to address illegal or unwanted trade in ozone-depleting substances and fluorinated global warming substances controlled under the Montreal Protocol and its Kigali Amendment. The award aims to providing recognition and visibility to those who support the implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

In total, 64 seizures were reported during the period 2019-2020: 14,617 refrigerant cylinders / ISO containers with more than 380 metric tons of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), and 215 pieces of equipment.

Informal Prior Informed Consent (iPIC) consultations between ECA countries and their trade partners prior to the issuance of the mandatory export and import licenses avoided 12 unwanted / illegal shipments of more than 167 metric tons of HCFCs and halons during the period 2019-2020. The reasons for rejection include import bans, importers who are not authorized / registered, fake licenses, no import quota, import license already used, or presenting a safety sheet instead of an import license (language issue).

In addition, Poland detected more than 31 metric tons of illegal HFC imports which had taken place in 2019-2020, and Spain detected illegal venting of more than 100 tons of refrigerants from recycling centers and illegal exports of more than 589 tons of hazardous waste to Pakistan.

The below charts show the results of the editions 1-5 of the ECA award scheme: 1) Tonnage of prevented illegal / unwanted trade through iPIC consultations and the tonnage of ODS/HFCs seized, 2) Number of equipment seized and the number of ODS/HFC cylinders/containers seized, and 3) Number of successful iPIC consultations and the number of ODS/HFC seizures. The amounts are significant.

WCO's Operation Demeter VIII resulted in the seizure of 25 tons of substances controlled by the Montreal Protocol. Polish Customs seized 1,239 non-refillable cylinders containing more than 19 tons of refrigerant. For more details, please see:

www.wcoomd.org/en/media/newsroom/2022/december/operation-demeter-viii.aspx .

Montreal Protocol Officers and focal points are encouraged to report seizures to the Ozone Secretariat (Email: mea-ozoneinfo@un.org), so that parties to the Montreal Protocol can be informed accordingly. For the reporting format, please refer to the Ozone Secretariat’s website: <https://ozone.unep.org/countries/additional-reported-information/illegal-trade> .

UNEP recently released the new publication “Watch out for illegal trade of HCFCs and HFCs – Lessons learned from the Global Montreal Protocol Award for Customs and Enforcement Officers”. It can be downloaded from UNEP’s document repository: <https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/42087>

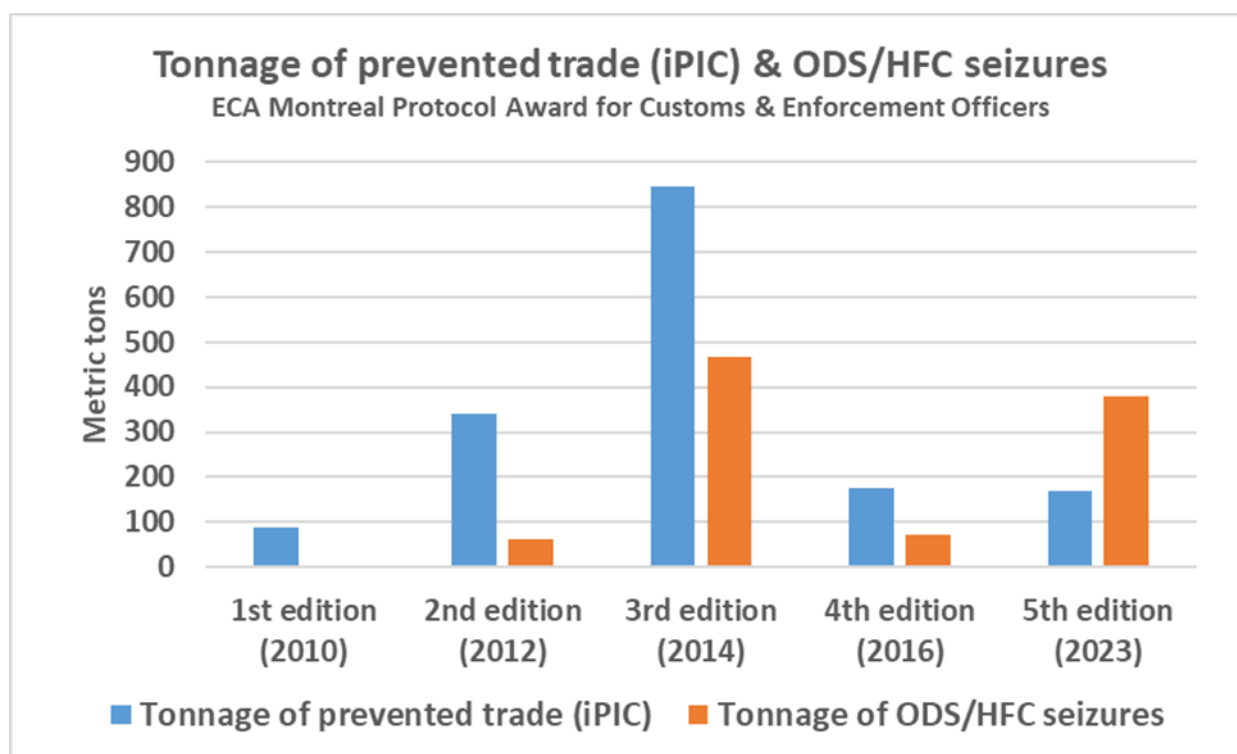
Additional information on the ECA award scheme is available:

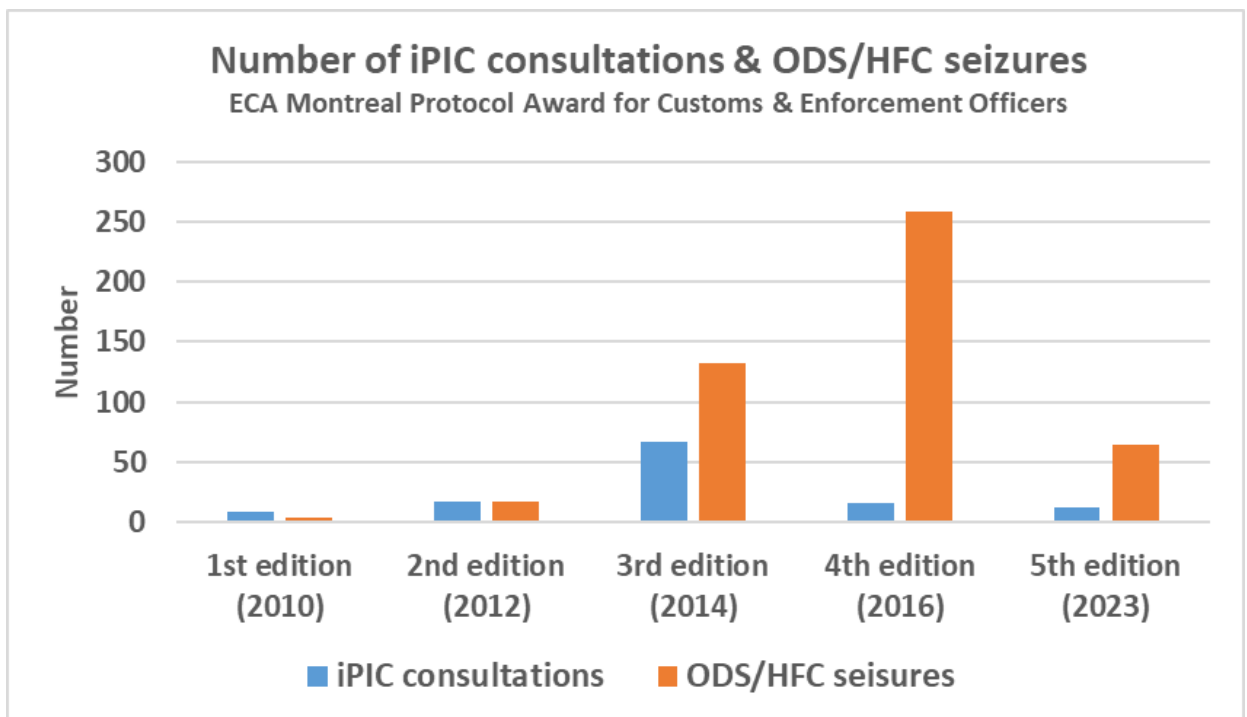
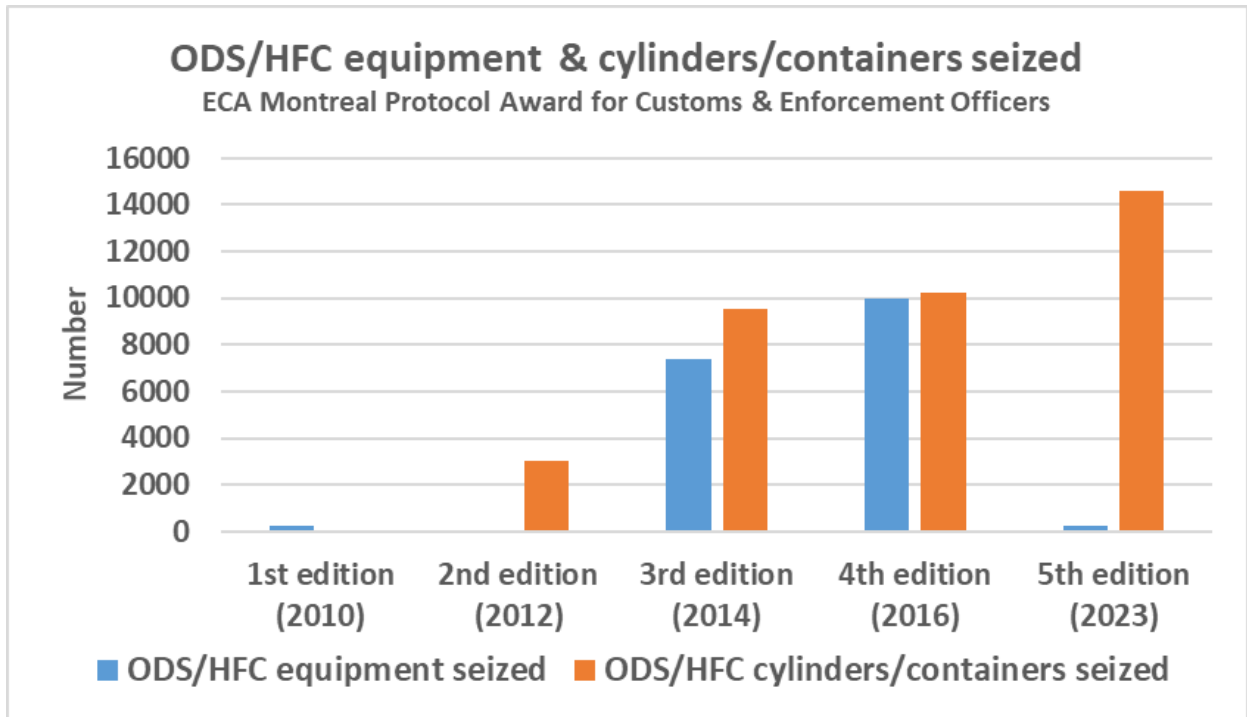
www.unep.org/ozonaction/index.php/resources/toolkits-manuals-and-guides/launching-europe-and-central-asia-eca-montreal-protocol-0

www.unep.org/ozonaction/index.php/news/news/europe-and-central-asia-montreal-protocol-award-customs-and-enforcement-officers-5th



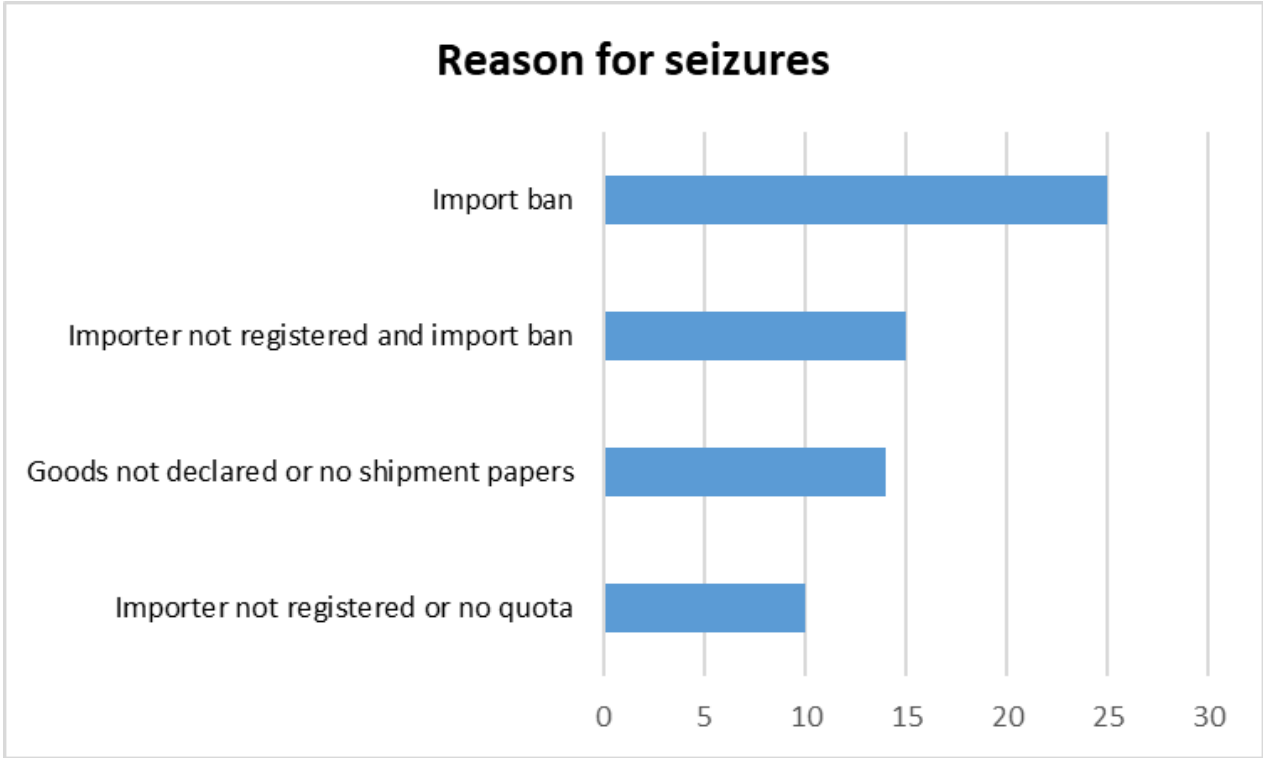
Charts showing the results of the editions 1-5 of the ECA award scheme:





Reasons for seizing illicit goods

There were different reasons for seizing illicit goods and often a combination of reasons. When the goods were concealed, they were obviously not declared. Usually the importer was not registered and had no import quota, or the import of the goods was banned. Import bans are based on national or regional legislation, e.g. bans on CFC imports, bans on HCFC imports into EU member states or bans on imports of certain types of equipment.



1st edition of the ECA Ozone Protection Award (2010)

UNEP's OzonAction Programme launched the first edition of the ECA Ozone Protection Award for Customs & Enforcement Officers in 2010 as part of the activities of the Regional Ozone Network for Europe & Central Asia. The first award ceremony took place in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, on 15 October 2010. Customs and Enforcement Officers from **Armenia, China, Croatia, European Union, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation and Serbia** received certificates and



medals of honour for their efforts to prevent illegal trade in ODS and ODS equipment. In the period from January 2009 to June 2010, the award winners reported 4 successful seizures of 248 pieces of equipment and 35 refrigerant cylinders/containers containing 368 metric kg of ODS. Informal Prior Informed Consent (iPIC) consultations prior to the issuance of trade licenses avoided 9 unwanted/illegal shipments of 87 metric tons of ODS. In addition, more than 805 metric tons of illegal trade in ODS has been detected, which had taken place in the past.

2nd edition of the ECA Ozone Protection Award (2012)

The second award ceremony took place in Istanbul, Turkey, on 11 October 2012 and awards of honor were presented to Customs and Enforcement Officers from **China, European Union, Finland, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia FYR, Russian Federation, Serbia, Turkey and Uzbekistan** in recognition of their strong commitment to address illegal/unwanted trade in ODS. In the period from July 2010 to August 2012, the award winners reported 17 successful seizures of 72 pieces of equipment and 3016 refrigerant cylinders/containers containing more than 61 metric tons of ODS. Informal Prior Informed Consent (iPIC) consultations prior to the issuance of trade licenses avoided 16 unwanted/illegal shipments of more than 342 metric tons of ODS. In addition, more than 103 metric tons of illegal trade in ODS has been detected, which had taken place in the past.



3rd edition of the ECA Ozone Protection Award (2014)

The third award ceremony took place in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, on 21 May 2014 and awards of honor were presented to Customs and Enforcement Officers from **Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Cyprus, European Union, Georgia, Germany, India, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, Russia, Serbia, Spain, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan** in recognition of their strong commitment to address illegal/unwanted trade in ODS. In the period

from September 2012 to April 2014, the award winners reported 133 successful seizures of 7370 pieces of equipment (appliances and compressors) and 9513 refrigerant cylinders /containers containing more than 467 metric tons of ozone-depleting chemicals and mixtures. Informal Prior Informed Consent (iPIC) consultations prior to the issuance of trade licenses avoided 67 unwanted/illegal shipments of more than 846 metric tons of ozone-depleting chemicals and mixtures. In addition, more than 175 metric tons of illegal trade in ODS has been detected, which had taken place in the past.



4th edition of the ECA Ozone Protection Award (2016)

The fourth award ceremony took place in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, on 25 May 2016, and awards of honor were presented to Customs and Enforcement Officers from **Bosnia & Herzegovina, China, Croatia, European Union, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Spain, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan**. In the period

from May 2014 to April 2016, the award winners reported 258 successful seizures of 9,947 pieces of equipment and 10,201 refrigerant cylinders / cans containing more than 70 metric tons of ozone-depleting substances (ODS), mixtures, products & equipment. Informal Prior Informed Consent (iPIC) consultations between trade partners prior to the issuance of the mandatory export and import licenses avoided 16 unwanted / illegal shipments of more than 174 metric tons of ODS and mixtures. In addition, Ukraine estimates that approximately 50,000 AC split system illegally entered the country in past years, which were declared as R134a equipment but contained R22 as refrigerant.



Report on seizures of ozone- depleting substances and fluorinated gases (2019 –2020)

1) Bulgaria: Seizure of 40 cylinders containing 490 kg of HFCs – most of the shipment papers were incorrect, and the goods were not declared.

Seizure cases/dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
5 May 2020	20 cylinders 20 cylinders	None	218 kg HFC-404A 272 kg HFC-134A

Seizure of 40 refrigerant cylinders at Customs Office Kapitan Andreevo on 5 May 2020

On 5 May 2020, a truck loaded with goods under warranty of 2 transit declarations with invoices and transport documents, arrived at Customs Office Kapitan Andreevo. It went through x-ray and customs control. During the inspection, customs officers found:

- 20 non-refillable cylinders containing 10.9 kg of HFC-404A each (208 kg in total)
- 20 non-refillable cylinders containing 13.6 kg of HFC-134A each (272 kg in total).

The goods were concealed with other goods in the truck. They arrived via Türkiye and the destination countries were Germany and Netherlands. The shipment papers were incorrect, and the goods were not declared. They were seized and handed over to the State for subsequent destruction. An administrative procedure was initiated, and a penalty of 14,530 BGN (about 7,265 Euros) was imposed.

2) Bulgaria: Seizure of 50 cylinders containing 604 kg of HFCs – most of the shipment papers were incorrect, and the goods were not declared.

Seizure cases/dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
5 June 2019	20 cylinders 30 cylinders	None	196 kg HFC-404A 408 kg HFC-134A

Seizure of 50 refrigerant cylinders at Customs Office Kapitan Andreevo on 5 June 2020

On 5 June 2019, a truck loaded with goods under warranty of 2 transit declarations with invoices and transport documents, arrived at Customs Office Kapitan Andreevo. It went through x-ray and customs control. During an inspection, customs officers found:

- 20 non-refillable cylinders containing 9.8 kg of HFC-404A each (196 kg in total)
- 30 non-refillable cylinders containing 13,6 kg of HFC-134A each (408 kg in total).

The goods were concealed with other goods in the truck. They arrived via Turkiye and the destination country was the Netherlands. The shipment papers were incorrect, and the goods were not declared. They were seized and handed over to the State for subsequent destruction. An administrative procedure was initiated and a penalty of 23,090 BGN (about 11,800 Euros) was imposed.

3) Bulgaria: Seizure of 966 cylinders containing 12.977,6 kg of HFCs – most of the shipment papers were incorrect, and the goods were not declared. The entire quantity was seized.

Seizure cases/dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
14 January 2020	100 cylinders 866 cylinders	None	1,200 kg HFC-134A 11,777.6 kg HFC-134a

Seizure of 966 refrigerant cylinders at Customs Office Kapitan Andreevo on 14 January 2020

On 14 January 2020, a truck was passing the Customs Office Kapitan Andreevo. The cargo was arriving from Turkiye and the destination was Hungary. Two transit declarations with invoices and CMRs were presented. The truck was x-rayed and physically inspected. Customs officers discovered:

- 100 non-refillable cylinders containing 1,200 kg of R-134a refrigerant (12 kg each)
- 866 non-refillable cylinders containing 11,777.6 kg of R-134a refrigerant (13,6 kg each).

The refrigerant cylinders were hidden between other goods loaded on the truck. The shipment papers were incorrect as the refrigerant cylinders had not been declared. The case was referred to the prosecutor. The entire quantity was seized. The court decision was not known at the time of submitting the nomination for this seizure.

4) Bulgaria: Seizure of 60 cylinders containing 634,5 kg of HFCs – most of the shipment papers were incorrect, and the goods were not declared. The entire quantity was seized.

Seizure cases/dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
10 December 2019	5 cylinders 55 cylinders	None	35 kg HFC-32 599.5 kg HFC-404A

Seizure of 60 refrigerant cylinders at Customs Office Malko Tarnovo on 10 December 2020

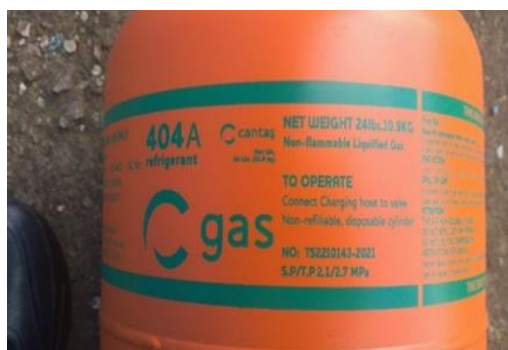
On 10 December 2020, a van was passing the Customs Office Malko Tarnovo. It was arriving from Turkiye. During the physical inspection, customs officers discovered undeclared refrigerant cylinders:

- 5 non-refillable cylinders containing 35 kg of HFC-32 refrigerant (7 kg each)
- 55 non-refillable cylinders containing 599.5 kg of HFC-404A refrigerant (10,9 kg each).

The refrigerant cylinders were hidden in black plastic bags and covered by furniture. There were no shipment papers, and the refrigerant cylinders were not declared to customs. The refrigerant type was confirmed through an analysis using gas chromatography. The cylinders were kept in customs storage during the investigation and prosecution. The origin of the HFC-32 cylinders was China, and for HFC-404A cylinders it was Turkiye. The entire quantity was seized. The court decision was not known at the time of submitting the nomination for this seizure.



R-32 refrigerant cylinders



HFC-404A refrigerant cylinders

5) Georgia: Three Iranian trucks entered the Customs Clearance Zone “Tbilisi 2” arriving from Azerbaijan. 19 cylinders containing 304 kg of refrigerants were seized.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
23 Jan 2019	17 cylinders 2 cylinders	None	272 kg HCFC-22 32 kg CFC-11

Seizure of R-22 and R-11 refrigerant cylinders at Customs Clearance Zone “Tbilisi 2”

On 23 January 2019, three Iranian trucks entered the Customs Clearance Zone “Tbilisi 2” through the customs checkpoint “Tsiteli Khidi” arriving from Azerbaijan. During an inspection of the cargo, customs officers detected and seized 19 non-refillable refrigerant cylinders - 17 cylinders containing R-22 and 2 cylinders containing R-11. In total, 304 kg of refrigerants were seized. The driver had no license to import controlled substances and the case was transferred to the Department of Environment Supervision.

The country of origin is unknown. The refrigerant was arriving via Iran and Azerbaijan with Georgia as the destination country. The shipment documents were incorrect. In any case, the import of R-11 is banned. The content of the refrigerant cylinders was analyzed using refrigerant identifiers. Photos

of the seized cylinders were provided. An administrative procedure was initiated, and penalties were imposed:

- 4,590 Georgian Lari or USD 1,700 USD for R-22
- 405 Georgian Lari or 150 USD for R-11.



R-22 and R-11 refrigerant cylinders seized at Customs Clearance Zone “Tbilisi 2”

6) Georgia: an Iranian truck entered the control zone of the Customs Checkpoint “Tsiteli Khidi” arriving from Azerbaijan. 2 cylinders containing 32 kg HCFC-22 were seized. The shipment documents were incorrect.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
12 Apr 2019	2 cylinders	None	32 kg HCFC-22

Seizure of R-22 refrigerant cylinders at Customs Checkpoint “Tsiteli Khidi”

On 12 April 2019, an Iranian truck entered the control zone of the Customs Checkpoint “Tsiteli Khidi” arriving from Azerbaijan. During an inspection of the cargo, the driver indicated that he was transporting 2 non-refillable refrigerant cylinders containing 32 kg of R-22. The driver had no license to import controlled substances. The cylinders were seized, and the case was transferred to the Department of Environment Supervision.

The country of origin is unknown. The refrigerant was arriving via Iran and Azerbaijan with Georgia as the destination country. The shipment documents were incorrect. The content of the refrigerant cylinders was not analyzed. Photos of the seized cylinders were provided. An administrative procedure was initiated, and penalties were imposed:

- 544 Georgian Lari or 200 USD.



Seizure of R-22 refrigerant cylinders at Customs Checkpoint “Tsiteli Khidi”

7) Netherlands: 1,400 non-refillable cylinders containing 13,945 kg of high-GWP HFC were seized. The importer was not registered in the EU F-gas portal and thus had no quota for HFC imports.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
1 case / 16 June 2020	1,400 cylinders	None	HFC-134a 7,480 kg HFC-404A 3,270 kg HFC-410A 1,695 kg HFC-32 1,500 kg

Seizure of an HFC shipment in Rotterdam in June 2020

On 15 June 2020, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) alerted the Dutch Customs of a suspect HFC shipment that should be stopped and seized. On 16 June 2020, the Dutch Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate inspected the shipment in Rotterdam (despite the Covid-19 pandemic), interviewed the drivers, and seized the goods. The investigation involved several other EU countries including Lithuania, Poland, and Germany and cooperation was established accordingly. Documents were examined and WhatsApp messages were recorded.

In total, 1,400 non-refillable cylinders containing 13,945 kg of high-GWP HFC were seized. This corresponds to 28,073 CO₂-equivalent tons:

- 7,480 kg of HFC-134a (corresponding to 10,696 CO₂-equivalent tons)
- 3,270 kg of HFC-404A (corresponding to 12,825 CO₂-equivalent tons)
- 1,695 kg of HFC-410A (corresponding to 3,539 CO₂-equivalent tons)
- 1,500 kg of HFC-32 (corresponding to 1,012 CO₂-equivalent tons).

The importer was not registered in the EU F-gas portal and thus had no quota for HFC imports. The importer lost about 50,000 Euros because of the loss of goods and the costs of transport and destruction of part of the refrigerants. The other part was placed on the EU market by official quota holders. The importer’s remaining quota was reduced accordingly. Because the importer cooperated with the Dutch Inspectorate, the Dutch prosecutor imposed a fine of 9,000 euros.

The shipment originated from China (Dongyang Weihua Company), passed through Hamburg in Germany, and was transiting the Netherlands. It was supposed to go to Lithuania but was meant to be shipped to Poland. This was not reflected in the shipment papers but indicated in the WhatsApp communication. The case was based on the abuse of the EU transit procedures. Photos of the seized goods as well as confidential copies of shipment documents and identity cards were provided.



OLAF
EUROPEAN ANTI-FRAUD OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE No 20/2020 3 July 2020

14 tonnes of illicit, climate-damaging gases seized thanks to OLAF intelligence

Dutch authorities last week seized approximately 14 tonnes of illicit refrigerant gases bound for the EU, with a potential environmental impact equivalent to 38 return flights from Amsterdam to Sydney. This successful operation was the result of close cooperation between the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and authorities in three EU countries – the Netherlands, Lithuania and Poland.

The gases in question were hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), which although they are used in refrigerated units can nonetheless be dangerous for the environment. This is why the import of HFCs into the EU is subject to strict quotas and regulations. The shipment in question, which came from China, contained refrigerant gases packaged in non-refillable cylinders, which are banned in the EU.

OLAF's investigation began when it identified a suspicious cargo destined for a consignee in Lithuania that was not registered to receive imports of this nature. In addition, the shipment coming from China was initially discharged in the port of Hamburg and declared in transit towards Rotterdam, in the Netherlands, despite the fact that the final destination was Lithuania.

OLAF alerted Lithuanian and Dutch customs, which in turn liaised with the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. Further investigations established that the cargo was destined for a storage facility in Poland. The Dutch authorities seized the shipment in Rotterdam, and OLAF informed Polish customs of the location of the suspicious storage facility.

According to calculations by the Dutch authorities, the gases contained in the illegal shipment have a high global warming potential, estimated to be 200 of times more than their own mass, giving them a carbon footprint of roughly 2,807 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent.

OLAF Director-General, Ville Itälä, said: "The fight against the illegal import of HFCs into the EU is one of OLAF's operational priorities, in line with the European Commission's ambition to make Europe the first climate neutral continent by 2050 with its European Green Deal. As the calculations relating to this shipment clearly show, the environmental impact of these illicit imports can be devastating. Preventing them from entering the EU is OLAF's contribution to protecting citizens and the environment and the legitimate trade. The successful seizure of these dangerous imports once again underlines the importance of accurate intelligence from OLAF and good cooperation with national authorities in keeping people safe."

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Photos of the HFC refrigerant cylinders seized in Rotterdam in June 2020

8) Italy / OLAF: the Italian Customs Agency seized 12,350 kg of HFCs in 1,098 cylinders in the Lombardy region: 4,060 kg of HFC-134a, 6,570 kg of HFC-410A, and 1,720 kg of HFC-404A. The importer was not registered in the portal, no quota was assigned.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
5 February 2020	1,098 cylinders	None	4,060 kg of HFC-134a 6,570 kg of HFC-410A 1,720 kg of HFC-404A

Seizure of 12,350 kg HFC refrigerants in Lombardy/Italy on 5 February 2020

On 5 February 2020, the Italian Customs Agency seized 12,350 kg of HFCs in 1,098 cylinders in the Lombardy region: 4,060 kg of HFC-134a, 6,570 kg of HFC-410A, and 1,720 kg of HFC-404A. If

these high-global-warming refrigerants were released into the atmosphere, it would have amounted to 26,269 CO₂-equivalent tons.

This successful operation was made possible by intelligence gathered by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and close operational cooperation between OLAF and the Italian Customs Agency. OLAF identified the receiver in Italy after detecting the shipments. Furthermore, the importer profile was examined, and the information was cross-checked with the EU F-gas portal. Because the importer was not registered in the portal, no quota was assigned. The container was transported on a truck arriving from Türkiye.

The illegal trade was discovered by cross-referencing customs data with the F-gas portal (registration and quota allocation) and performing a physical inspection of the shipments to determine the type and quality of the cylinders shipped. The seized HFCs were held in a customs warehouse for the Public Prosecution Office, which oversees the criminal investigation. A court case has been initiated, and fines and penalties have been imposed under Italian law.



12.5 tonnes of illegally imported refrigerant gases seized with OLAF's help

In close cooperation with OLAF, the Italian Customs Agency seized 12.5 tonnes of fluorinated greenhouse gases, so called hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) last week. The seizure follows OLAF's pledge to make the fight against the illegal imports of HFCs into the EU one of its operational priorities, fully matching one of the key priorities of the new Commission: making Europe the first climate neutral continent by 2050, "the European Green Deal".

The Italian Customs Agency seized 1 098 cylinders containing HFC gas (R134a, R410a and R404a) in the region of Lombardy on 5-6 February 2020. This successful operation was the result of intelligence received by the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and of close operational cooperation between OLAF and the Italian Customs Agency.

The products seized have a high Global Warming Potential (GWP), estimated to be thousands of times more than their own mass, approximately 26 269 tonnes of CO₂e, as per the CO₂e calculation formula in Regulation (EU) No 517/2014 on fluorinated greenhouse gases (F-gases).

Tonnes of CO ₂ Equivalent and GWP			
HFC	GWP	Kg. Seized	Tonnes CO ₂ e
R134a	1.430	4.060	5.805,80
R410a	2.088	6.570	13.718,16
R404a	3.922	1.720	6.745,84
			26.269,80

According to calculations by the Italian Customs Agency, this total amount of carbon dioxide corresponds to CO₂ emitted by more than 100 small cars (110 CO₂ g/km), along a distance of almost 239 million kilometres.

HFC gases were introduced as replacements for ozone depleting substances, and are often used in refrigerated units. HFCs do not deplete the ozone layer but are potent greenhouse gases, often with a high global warming potential. The fight against the illegal import of HFCs into the EU is one of the operational priorities for OLAF, in line with the key priority of the Commission to make Europe the first climate neutral continent by 2050, "The European Green Deal". To this end, OLAF organised a Conference on the fight

against illegal imports of refrigerant gases into the EU in Brussels last month to gather information from industry and stakeholders in the area, and strengthen the exchange among customs authorities and the competent environmental authorities.



OLAF mission, mandate and competences:

OLAF's mission is to detect, investigate and stop fraud with EU funds.

OLAF fulfils its mission by:

- carrying out independent investigations into fraud and corruption involving EU funds, so as to ensure that all EU taxpayers' money reaches projects that can create jobs and growth in Europe;
- contributing to strengthening citizens' trust in the EU Institutions by investigating serious misconduct by EU staff and members of the EU Institutions;
- developing a sound EU anti-fraud policy.

In its independent investigative function, OLAF can investigate matters relating to fraud, corruption and other offences affecting the EU financial interests concerning:

- all EU expenditure: the main spending categories are Structural Funds, agricultural policy and rural development funds, direct expenditure and external aid;
- some areas of EU revenue, mainly customs duties;
- suspicions of serious misconduct by EU staff and members of the EU Institutions.

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[@OLAFPress](https://twitter.com/OLAFPress)

Seizure of 12,350 kg HFC refrigerants in Lombardy/Italy on 5 February 2020

9) Netherlands / OLAF: the Dutch authorities seized 13,945 kg of HFC refrigerants in Rotterdam/Netherlands. The consignment included 9,130 kg of HFC-134a (550 cylinders), 2,295 kg of HFC-410A (150 cylinders), 4,320 kg of HFC-404A (300 cylinders), and 2,100 kg of HFC-R32 (150 cylinders). A total of 1,150 disposable cylinders were confiscated.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
15 June 2020	550 cylinders 150 cylinders 300 cylinders 150 cylinders	None	13,945 kg of HFCs (HFC-134a, HFC-410A, HFC-404A, HFC-32)

Seizure of 13,945 kg of HFC refrigerants in Rotterdam/Netherlands on 15 June 2020

On 15 June 2020, the Dutch authorities seized 13,945 kg of HFC refrigerants in Rotterdam/Netherlands. If these high-global-warming refrigerants were released into the atmosphere, it would have amounted to emissions of 2,807 CO₂-equivalent tons. In terms of gross weight, the consignment included 9,130 kg of HFC-134a (550 cylinders), 2,295 kg of HFC-410A (150 cylinders), 4,320 kg of HFC-404A (300 cylinders), and 2,100 kg of HFC-R32 (150 cylinders). A total of 1,150 disposable cylinders were confiscated. The confiscated HFC refrigerants were destroyed.

The HFCs were shipped from China in non-refillable cylinders, which are illegal in the EU. The OLAF investigation began when it discovered a suspicious HFC cargo destined for a Lithuanian consignee that was not registered in the EU F-gas registry. Furthermore, the shipment from China was initially discharged in Hamburg (Germany) and declared in transit to Rotterdam (Netherlands), even though the destination was Lithuania. The transport from Hamburg to Rotterdam took place by vessel and truck under the external transit procedure.

OLAF notified Lithuanian and Dutch customs, who contacted the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. Further investigation revealed that the cargo was bound for a Polish storage facility. The shipment was seized by Dutch authorities in Rotterdam, where the import declaration was submitted, and OLAF notified Polish customs of the suspicious storage facility's location. The Dutch authorities have opened a criminal investigation and were prosecuting the infringement under customs legislation and the EU F-gas regulation. The success of this operation was due to close collaboration between the OLAF and authorities in three EU countries: the Netherlands, Lithuania, and Poland.

14 tonnes of illicit, climate-damaging gases seized thanks to OLAF intelligence

Dutch authorities last week seized approximately 14 tonnes of illicit refrigerant gases bound for the EU, with a potential environmental impact equivalent to 38 return flights from Amsterdam to Sydney. This successful operation was the result of close cooperation between the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) and authorities in three EU countries – the Netherlands, Lithuania and Poland.

The gases in question were hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), which although they are used in refrigerated units can nonetheless be dangerous for the environment. This is why the import of HFCs into the EU is subject to strict quotas and regulations. The shipment in question, which came from China, contained refrigerant gases packaged in non-refillable cylinders, which are banned in the EU.

OLAF's investigation began when it identified a suspicious cargo destined for a consignee in Lithuania that was not registered to receive imports of this nature. In addition, the shipment coming from China was initially discharged in the port of Hamburg and declared in transit towards Rotterdam, in the Netherlands, despite the fact that the final destination was Lithuania.

OLAF alerted Lithuanian and Dutch customs, which in turn liaised with the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. Further investigations established that the cargo was destined for a storage facility in Poland. The Dutch authorities seized the shipment in Rotterdam, and OLAF informed Polish customs of the location of the suspicious storage facility.

According to calculations by the Dutch authorities, the gases contained in the illegal shipment have a high global warming potential, estimated to be 200 of times more than their own mass, giving them a carbon footprint of roughly 2,807 tonnes of CO2 equivalent.

OLAF Director-General, Ville Itälä, said: "The fight against the illegal import of HFCs into the EU is one of OLAF's operational priorities, in line with the European Commission's ambition to make Europe the first climate neutral continent by 2050 with its European Green Deal. As the calculations relating to this shipment clearly show, the environmental impact of these illicit imports can be devastating. Preventing them from entering the EU is OLAF's contribution to protecting citizens and the environment and the legitimate trade. The successful seizure of these dangerous imports once again underlines the importance of accurate intelligence from OLAF and good cooperation with national authorities in keeping people safe."

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More information about this case can be found on the website of the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management ([in Dutch](#)).

OLAF mission, mandate and competences:

OLAF's mission is to detect, investigate and stop fraud with EU funds.

OLAF fulfils its mission by:

- carrying out independent investigations into fraud and corruption involving EU funds, so as to ensure that all EU taxpayers' money reaches projects that can create jobs and growth in Europe;
- contributing to strengthening citizens' trust in the EU Institutions by investigating serious misconduct by EU staff and members of the EU Institutions;
- developing a sound EU anti-fraud policy.

In its independent investigative function, OLAF can investigate matters relating to fraud, corruption and other offences affecting the EU financial interests concerning:

- all EU expenditure: the main spending categories are Structural Funds, agricultural policy and rural development funds, direct expenditure and external aid;
- some areas of EU revenue, mainly customs duties;
- suspicions of serious misconduct by EU staff and members of the EU Institutions.

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Seizure of 13,945 kg of HFC refrigerants in Rotterdam/Netherlands on 15 June 2020

10) Romania / OLAF: Romanian authorities prevented the illegal import of 66,652.5 kg of HFC refrigerants into the EU market. The refrigerants were packaged in non-refillable cylinders, which are prohibited in the EU. Except in one case where the goods were made available to the authorities, the refrigerant gases were returned to the shipper.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
25 May 2020	Not known	None	13,350 kg of HFCs
18 June 2020	Not known	None	13,440 kg of HFCs
19 June 2020	Not known	None	13,350 of HFCs
19 June 2020	1,034 cylinders	None	9,512.5 kg of HFC-404A
30 June 2020	Not known	None	13,440 kg of HFCs
16 July 2020	Not known	None	3,560 kg of HFC-507 (HFC-134a, HFC-404A, HFC-407C, HFC-507)

Six seizures of HFC refrigerants in Romania during May - July 2020

During May – July 2020, based on OLAF intelligence, Romanian authorities prevented the illegal import of 66,652.5 kg of HFC refrigerants into the EU market. The shipments included HFC-134a, HFC-404A, HFC-407C and HFC-507. If released into the atmosphere, this amount of high-global-warming HFCs corresponds to approximately 170,000 CO2-equivalent tons.

In total, there were six seizures on 25 May, 18 June, 19 June (2 seizures), 30 June, and 16 July 2020. OLAF investigators were following a suspicious shipment from China that was discharged in Türkiye, removed from its container, and trucked to the EU. Customs documents revealed that several shipments were destined for five different consignees in Romania. Four of the consignees were not registered in the EU F-gas registry, and the fifth would have far exceeded its 2020 quota. Furthermore,

in most cases, the refrigerants were packaged in non-refillable cylinders, which are prohibited in the EU.

The illegal trade was discovered by cross-referencing customs data with the EU F-gas portal (registration and quota allocation) and performing physical inspections of the shipments to determine the type and quality of the refrigerants in the cylinders shipped. OLAF notified Romania's General Directorate of Customs, which coordinated with the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests, as well as the National Environmental Guard, to prevent the shipments from reaching the EU market. Except in one case where the goods were made available to the authorities, the refrigerant gases were returned to the shipper. Court cases were initiated and resulted in financial penalties.



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Six seizures of HFC refrigerants in Romania during May - July 2020
(press release includes also a seizure on 11 August 2020)

11) Italy / OLAF: Italian Customs stopped a shipment of 3,700 kg of HFCs packaged in 300 non-refillable cylinders. The import of HFCs in non-refillable cylinders is prohibited in the EU. The goods were miss-declared as empty cylinders.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
23 September 2020	300 cylinders	None	1,400 kg HFC-134a 700 kg HFC-410A 1,100 kg HFC-404A 500 kg HFC-R32

Seizure of 3,700 kg of HFC refrigerants in Livorno / Italy on 23 September 2020

On 23 September 2020, Italian Customs stopped a shipment of 3,700 kg of HFCs packaged in 300 non-refillable cylinders. The import of HFCs in non-refillable cylinders is prohibited in the EU. The

shipment contained 1,400 kg of HFC-134a, 700 kg of HFC-410A, 1,100 kg of HFC-404A, and 500 kg of HFC-R32.

The consignee was not registered in the EU F-gas portal and thus did not have any HFC import quota. The goods were miss-declared as empty cylinders. The amount of high-global warming refrigerant gases seized corresponds to approximately 6,800 CO₂-equivalent tons if released into the atmosphere. The cargo travelled by sea from China to Livorno in Italy.

OLAF recommended the cross-checking of customs data with those in the EU F-gas portal to validate the import authorization of the consignee. OLAF also drew attention to the possible misdeclaration of the goods as empty cylinders. The shipment was chosen for documentary control based on the sensitivity of the declaration and the HS code used by the national risk profiling system.

The responsible Customs Officer was particularly attentive to possible misdeclaration and requested a physical inspection. The cylinders were filled and not empty as had been declared in the shipment papers. Thereafter, the EU F-gas portal was consulted, and it was established that the importer was not registered and thus did not have import authorization. The seized goods were made available to Italian authorities, which opened a criminal case and prosecuted the infringement under the Italian customs legislation and the EU F-gas regulation.



PRESS RELEASE No 27/2020

24 September 2020

OLAF helps Italian authorities seize 3.7 tonnes of illicit refrigerant gases

Italian customs authorities stopped a shipment of 300 cylinders of illicit, climate-damaging refrigerant gases from entering the EU early last month. OLAF supported the operation by providing the Italian authorities with additional information regarding the consignment.

The cargo had travelled from China to the port of Livorno, Italy. It contained approximately 3.7 tonnes of hydrofluorocarbon gases (HFC) and hydrochlorofluorocarbon gases (HCFC), packaged in 300 non-refillable cylinders. Italian customs authorities identified the consignment as suspicious and seized it after verifications and information provided by OLAF confirmed its illicit nature.

HFC gases are widely used in refrigerated units, but because of their heavy environmental footprint, imports into the EU are subject to strict quotas. The importer of the seized consignment had no right to fill any of these quotas; moreover, the imported gases were in non-refillable cylinders, which are not allowed to be imported into the EU. The environmental impact of the cargo, had it reached the market, would have been roughly equivalent to the emissions produced by a car travelling for 35 million kilometres, around 6,800 tonnes of CO₂. More details about the seizure can be read (in Italian) in the [press release of the Italian Agency for Customs and Monopoly](#).

This is the latest in a series of cases involving illicit imports of refrigerant gases this summer where OLAF has provided invaluable support to national customs authorities. One cargo was [seized by the Dutch authorities](#) and another [by the Romanian authorities](#) thanks to intelligence provided by OLAF.

Commenting on the latest case, OLAF Director-General Ville Itälä said: *"One positive cooperation case leads to the next. We are happy that OLAF was able to support the Italian authorities in this successful operation, just as we did earlier in the year with our colleagues in the Netherlands and Romania. This is precisely the kind of cooperation that we are working hard to establish between OLAF and national authorities, not only in Europe but across the globe. Such cooperation is the key to defeating the smugglers and counterfeiters, and all the more important when it helps stop dangerous gases like HFCs causing irreparable damage to our environment, health and economy."*

Seizure of 3,700 kg of HFC refrigerants in Livorno / Italy on 23 September 2020

12) Romania / OLAF: Romanian customs office in Otopeni, near Bucharest, stopped a shipment of 11,000 kg of HFC-404A (1,100 cylinders) based on an OLAF alert. Documentary and physical inspections confirmed that the consignee was not registered in the EU F-gas portal and thus did not have an import quota for HFCs.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
7 October 2020	1,100 cylinders	None	11,000 kg HFC-404A

Seizure of 11,000 kg of HFC-404A refrigerant in Otopeni / Romania on 7 October 2020

On 7 October 2020, the Romanian customs office in Otopeni, near Bucharest, stopped a shipment of 11,000 kg of HFC-404A (1,100 cylinders) based on an OLAF alert. The shipment arrived by road from Türkiye.

OLAF had cross-checked customs data with those in the EU F-gas portal and detected a shipment destined for a consignee, who was an importer of fruits and vegetables but not registered for the import of refrigerants into the EU. The office alerted the General Directorate of Customs and the National Environmental Guard and informed them about the shipment details, expected date of arrival, quantities shipped and the reasons why the shipment was suspicious.

Documentary and physical inspections confirmed that the consignee was not registered in the EU F-gas portal and thus did not have an import quota for HFCs. OLAF received an official confirmation from the General Directorate of Customs that the shipment left the EU on 15 October 2020.

13) Poland / OLAF: Polish Customs discovered 9 ISO containers containing 145,520 kg of refrigerant HFC-404A in Malaszewicze / Poland. The consignee was not registered in the EU F-gas registry and thus did not have a quota for the import of HFCs.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
11 December 2020 31 Dec 2020	7 ISO containers 2 ISO containers	None None	129,710 kg of HFC-404A 15,810 kg of HFC-404A

Seizure of 145,520 kg of HFC-404A in Malaszewicze / Poland in December 2020

On 11 December 2020, OLAF notified the Dutch and German authorities that several ISO containers containing refrigerants from China had been declared in transit from the Netherlands to Germany. Subsequently, the transit documents in Germany were replaced with new transit documents indicating that the ISO containers will be shipped to Poland.

Based on an OLAF alert, Polish Customs discovered 9 ISO containers containing 145,520 kg of refrigerant HFC-404A in Malaszewicze/Poland. They had been declared for release and free circulation on the EU market. However, the consignee was not registered in the EU F-gas registry and thus did not have a quota for the import of HFCs.

The shipment was stored in a customs warehouse during an investigation and while the authorizations were clarified. Four containers were returned to the shipper (69,760 kg), three containers were re-exported to the United Kingdom (59,950 kg), and two containers were retained by the Polish authorities (15,810 kg) on 31 December 2020.

14) Additional seizures reported by OLAF as per their list of seizures in 2020:
 Romanian Customs seized 1,034 cylinders containing 9,512.5 kg of HFC refrigerants, 600 cylinders containing 1,020 kg of HFC refrigerants and 25,500 kg of HFC refrigerants
 Bulgarian Customs Agency seized 2,060 kg of HFC refrigerants
 German Customs seized 6,000 kg of HFC refrigerants
 French Customs seized 3,972 kg of HFC refrigerants, 8,000 kg of HFC refrigerants, 935 kg of HFC refrigerants, and 1,140 cylinders containing 11,400 kg of HFC refrigerants.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
11 August 2020	1,034 cylinders	None	9,512.5 kg of HFCs
10 November 2020	600 cylinders	None	1,020 kg of HFCs
18 November 2020 (Romania)	Not known	None	25,500 kg of HFCs
21 August 2020 (Bulgaria)	Not known	None	2,060 kg of HFCs
5 November 2020 (Germany)	Not known	None	6,000 kg of HFCs
20 July 2020	Not known	None	3,972 kg of HFCs
29 September 2020	Not known	None	8,000 kg of HFCs
7 October 2020	Not known	None	935 kg of HFCs
21 November 2020 (France)	1,140 cylinders	None	11,400 kg of HFCs

Additional seizures reported by OLAF as per their list of seizures in 2020

Romania

- 11 August 2020 – Romanian Customs seized 1,034 cylinders containing 9,512.5 kg of HFC refrigerants. The cylinders were non-refillable. The consignee was not registered in the EU F-gas portal and thus did not have a quota to import HFCs. The goods were returned to the shipper.
- 10 November 2020 – Romanian Customs seized 600 cylinders containing 1,020 kg of HFC refrigerants (340 kg of HFC-410A and 680 kg of HFC-404A). The consignee was not registered in the EU F-gas portal and thus did not have a quota to import HFCs. The goods were returned to the shipper.
- 18 November 2020 – Romanian Customs seized 25,500 kg of HFC refrigerants. The consignee was not registered in the EU F-gas portal and thus did not have a quota to import HFCs. The goods were returned to the shipper.

Bulgaria

- 21 August 2020 – Bulgarian Customs Agency seized 2,060 kg of HFC refrigerants (HFC-507, HFC-422). The consignee was not registered in the EU F-gas portal and thus did not have a quota to import HFCs. The goods were returned to the shipper.

Germany

- 5 November 2020 – German Customs seized 6,000 kg of HFC refrigerants. They were misdeclared as frigorific equipment. The consignee was not registered in the EU F-gas portal and thus did not have a quota to import HFCs. The goods were returned to the shipper.

France

- 20 July 2020 – French Customs seized 3,972 kg of HFC refrigerants. The cylinders were non-refillable and made available to French authorities.
- 29 September 2020 – French Customs seized 8,000 kg of HFC refrigerants. The cylinders were non-refillable and made available to French authorities.
- 7 October 2020 – French Customs seized 935 kg of HFC refrigerants. The cylinders were non-refillable and made available to French authorities.
- 21 November 2020 – French Customs seized 1,140 cylinders containing 11,400 kg of HFC refrigerants. The cylinders were non-refillable and made available to French authorities.

More recent OLAF press releases and reports related to illegal trade in refrigerants

- Combatting European environmental crimes takes center stage in Norway
https://anti-fraud.ec.europa.eu/media-corner/news/combating-european-environmental-crimes-takes-centre-stage-norway-2022-08-25-0_en
 - OLAF helps dismantle criminal networks involved in the illicit trade of refrigerant gases:
https://anti-fraud.ec.europa.eu/media-corner/news/olaf-helps-dismantle-criminal-network-involved-illicit-trade-refrigerant-gases-2022-06-30_en
- OLAF Report 2021: OLAF in 2021: Exposing and preventing fraud
https://anti-fraud.ec.europa.eu/media-corner/news/olaf-2021-exposing-and-preventing-fraud-2022-06-08_en
https://anti-fraud.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-09/olaf-report-2021_en.pdf
- €10 million worth of illicit refrigerant gases seized:
https://anti-fraud.ec.europa.eu/media-corner/news/eu10-million-worth-illicit-refrigerant-gases-seized-2021-10-19_en
- Fraud against the environment: OLAF and Spanish authorities bust traffic in illicit F-gases:
https://anti-fraud.ec.europa.eu/media-corner/news/fraud-against-environment-olaf-and-spanish-authorities-bust-traffic-illicit-f-gases-2021-07-15_en
- OLAF Report 2020: OLAF in 2020: Stopping fraud, keeping Europeans safe:
https://anti-fraud.ec.europa.eu/media-corner/news/olaf-2020-stopping-fraud-keeping-europeans-safe-2021-06-10_en
- OLAF Report 2020:
https://anti-fraud.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-12/olaf_report_2020_en.pdf

OLAF summary of refrigerant seizures 2020

Seizure dates	Country	Number of seized containers	Weight brut/net kg	Amount and type of seized substance	REASONS
5-Feb-20	Italy	1,098 cylinders	12350	4,060 kg HFC-134a; 6,570 kg HFC-410A; 1,720 kg HFC-404A	Consignee is not registered in the F-gas portal. Disposable cylinders.
25-May-20	Romania		16655/13350	15165 kg HFC-134a; 737.5 kg HFC-404A; 752.5 kg HFC- 407C	Consignee not registered/lack of quota. Disposable cylinders.
15-Jun-20	Netherlands	1150 cylinders	17845/13945	9,130 kg HFC-134a; 2,295 kg HFC-410A; 4,320 kg HFC-404A; 2,100 kg HFC-R32	Consignee not registered. Disposable cylinders.
18-Jun-20	Romania		23900/13440		Consignee is not registered. Disposable cylinders.
19-Jun-20	Romania		16655/13350	15165 kg HFC-134a; 737.5 kg HFC-404A; 752.5 kg HFC- 407C	Consignee is not registered. Disposable cylinders.
19-Jun-20	Romania	1034 cylinders	19646/9512.5	R 404 a	Importer exceeded quota.
30-Jun-20	Romania		23960/13440		Consignee is not registered. Disposable cylinders.
16-Jul-20	Romania		6297/3560	R 507	Consignee is not registered.
20-Jul-20	France		5319/3972		Disposable cylinders.
11-Aug-20	Romania	1034 cylinders	19646/9512.5		Consignee is not registered. Disposable cylinders.
21-Aug-20	Bulgaria		3362/2060	R507; R422	Consignee is not registered

					in the F-gas portal.
23-Sep-20	Italy	300	3700	1,400 kg HFC-134a; 700 kg HFC-410A; 1,100 kg HFC-404A; 500 kg HFC- R32;	Misdeclaration of the goods (empty cylinders). Consignee is not registered in the F-gas portal. Disposable cylinders.
29-Sep-20	France		8000		Disposable cylinders.
7-Oct-20	Romania	1100 cylinders	19000/11000	R 404 A	Consignee is not registered in the F-gas portal. Disposable cylinders.
7-Oct-20	France		935		Disposable cylinders.
5-Nov-20	Germany		11000/6000		Misdeclaration of the goods (Frigorific equipment). Consignee not registered in the F-gas portal.
10-Nov-20	Romania	600 cylinders	1020	340 kg HFC-410A; 680 kg HFC-404A	Importer not registered in the F-gas portal.
18-Nov-20	Romania		25500		Importer not registered in the F-gas portal.
21-Nov-20	France	1140 cylinders	11400		Disposable cylinders.
11-Dec-20	Poland	9 ISO containers	145520	R4040A	importer not registered in the F-gas portal.

15) Poland: Two HFC consignments of 24,459 kg in total were intercepted at the Customs Office in Łódź because they did not comply with the requirements of the EU F-gas regulation. The importer was not registered in the EU F-gas registry and did not have an import quota for 2019.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
2 cases / 8 Mar 2019	1,150 cylinders	None	2,260 kg HFC-507A 1,130 kg HFC-410A 1,695 kg HFC-407C 3,270 kg HFC-404A 5,540 kg HFC-134a
	972 cylinders	None	1,650 kg HFC-507A 1,000 kg HFC-410A 1,100 kg HFC-407C 2,450 kg HFC-404A 4,464 kg HFC-134a

Customs Office in Łódź

On 8 March 2019, two HFC consignments of 24,459 kg in total were intercepted at the Customs Office in Łódź because they did not comply with the requirements of the EU F-gas regulation:

13,895 kg of HFC refrigerants in non-refillable containers (1,150 pieces) - due to the ban on placing on the market non-reusable F-gas containers and lack of import quota (customs declaration 19PL361010I0086578):

- HFC-507A (2,260 kg in 200 cylinders)
- HFC-410A (1,130 kg in 100 cylinders)
- HFC-407C (1,695 kg in 150 cylinders)
- HFC-404A (3,270 kg in 300 cylinders)
- HFC-134a (5,540 kg in 400 cylinders).

10,664 kg of HFC refrigerants in 972 reusable containers - due to lack of import quota and incorrect labeling (customs declaration 19PL361010I0084402):

- HFC-507A (1,650 kg in 150 cylinders)
- HFC-410A (1,000 kg in 100 cylinders)
- HFC-407C (1,100 kg in 100 cylinders)
- HFC-404A (2,450 kg in 250 cylinders)
- HFC-134a (4,464 kg in 372 cylinders).

The shipments were initially under transit procedure from Poland (Gdynia) to Ukraine, yet the goods were declared for release to free circulation in the inland customs office in Łódź. The shipment papers indicated that the consignor was Chinese, and the consignee was Ukrainian. The shipment took place by road and was not concealed. The shipment papers were correct and there was no misdeclaration. Yet the importer was not registered in the EU F-gas registry and did not have an import quota for 2019. Laboratory testing of 10 cylinders (refillable and non-refillable) confirmed the declared HFCs. No impurities were detected.

Two separate court cases were initiated - one concerning non-refillable cylinders (banned goods) and the other one concerning lack of registration and import quota. The refrigerants were not released for

free circulation and were detained as evidence for the case. The court ruled forfeiture of the HFCs to the State.



Photos of refrigerant cylinders seized by the Customs Office in Łódź

16) Poland: OLAF provided intelligence on possible illegal shipments of approximately 180 tonnes of HFCs (packaged in 9 containers each having separate transit notes) in transit from the Netherlands via Germany to Poland). Controls of shipment documents and physical inspections of two ISO containers were carried out by the Customs Branch in Małaszewicze. They contained 6,580 kg of HFC-404A and 9,230 kg of HFC-404A.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
2 cases / 31 Dec 2020	1 ISO tank 1 ISO tank	None	6,580 kg HFC-404A 9,230 kg HFC-404A

Customs Branch in Małaszewicze

In 2020, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) provided intelligence on possible illegal shipments of approximately 180 tonnes of HFCs (packaged in 9 containers each having separate transit notes) in transit from the Netherlands via Germany to Poland (Małaszewicze - rail border crossing point with Belarus).

Subsequently, OLAF and the Customs Department cooperated closely with the Strategic Analyses Centre to include relevant risk profiles in customs clearance systems. They covered different scenarios and related requirements:

- 1) Declaring release for free circulation - must be done by a registered entity having a quota for 2020
- 2) Re-export - must prevent HFCs are subsequently released for free circulation without registration and valid quota
- 3) Transit – must alert other EU member states of the risk that unregistered entities declare the release for free circulation.

On 31 December 2020, controls of shipment documents and physical inspections of two ISO containers were carried out by the Customs Branch in Małaszewicze, based on the risk profiles set by the Strategic Analyses Centre in Katowice. They contained 6,580 kg of HFC-404A (customs declaration ZCP20PL301020I0418324) and 9,230 kg of HFC-404A (customs declaration ZCP20PL301020I0418359), were transported by sea and road (multimodal transport) and not concealed. Two separate customs declarations were lodged declaring the release for free circulation in the EU. The consignees were not registered in the EU F-gas portal (i.e., did not have a license).

The shipments were initially under transit procedure from the Netherlands to Germany. However, it was highly probable that the shipments were destined for Poland as one company referred to in the accompanying documentation was based in Poland. The customs declarations indicated a Chinese consignor, and the consignees were UK-based companies. There was no laboratory examination, but the ISO containers were weighed as there was a risk that part of their contents was removed. No divergences were identified.

Two court cases were initiated. The court decisions stated that the HFCs now belong to the State. They are being considered for auctioning off (if the buyer meets all the conditions of the F-gas legislation). The seizures were the result of a joint effort of OLAF, the Customs Department, the Ministry of Finance, the Strategic Analyses Centre in Katowice, and the Customs Branch in Małaszewicze. The other 7 ISO containers for which OLAF had sent alerts were shipped via Gdynia to the United Kingdom and Türkiye. They were monitored until they were loaded on the vessels.



Photos of ISO containers seized by the Customs Branch in Małaszewicze

17) Poland: Activities conducted by the Customs Department in 2019-2020 – illegal trade detected in 2019-2020.

Illegal trade detected which took place during 2019-2020			
Number of cases / dates	Number of containers	Number of equipment	Amount and type of substance
2 cases / 2019-2020	1,215 cylinders 1,586 cylinders	None	14, 580 kg HFC-134a 16, 608 kg HFC-410A

Activities conducted by the Customs Department in 2019-2020

Co-operation with other EU member states: In 2019, the Customs Department proposed to other EU member states take joint action on F-gases to determine risks, identify best working practices, and coordinate uniform measures in the EU. The Customs Department organized and hosted three meetings of the EU working group on F-gases in Poland.

Co-operation with the Polish F-gas competent authorities: Annual meetings of representatives of the F-gas competent authorities and the Revenue Administration Regional Offices.

Co-operation with European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF): Intensive cooperation at an operational level with OLAF and control of suspicious shipments following intelligence received from OLAF.

Training, instruction, and assistance to customs officers: Four training sessions related to F-gases in regional offices and assistance to customs officers carrying out inspections of HFC consignments.



EU F-gas group meeting in Krakow in 2019



Meeting with customs and F-gas competent bodies in Kas-Gios in 2019

Revenue Administration Regional Office in Gdańsk

On 2 November 2020, the documentary control of two HFC shipments revealed that 31,188 kg of HFCs (2,801 cylinders) were illegally introduced into the EU customs territory during the period 2019-2020. Following the EU F-gas Regulation and Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1191/2014 of 30 October 2014, all HFC shipments that stay longer on the EU territory than is permitted by customs law on temporary storage of goods need to be reported and the entity that imported such HFCs should be registered in the EU F-gas registry.

The HFC shipments were placed in customs warehouses in November 2019 and September 2020 and exceeded the maximum storage time. Thus, the owner of the HFCs did not comply with the requirement to report the shipment to the competent authorities and to be registered in the EU F-gas registry. The owner of the HFCs was informed about the breach of legislation. Monitoring shipments of controlled substances that are covered by procedures such as transit or customs warehouse is an important aspect of the enforcement of the EU F-gas legislation.

The same company was also involved in other suspicious transit shipments to and from Poland in 2020. They concerned HFCs in non-refillable cylinders that were either destined for Poland as well as transit operations with non-EU destinations e.g., Ukraine, Serbia, and Moldova. Most of these transit shipments never reached their destination e.g., they might have arrived but did not cross the EU border, or they stayed in Poland while an empty semi-trailer reached the EU border. These suspicious movements aimed at distracting custom's attention to facilitate the illegal placement of refrigerants on the EU market, which were either contained in non-refillable cylinders (banned in the EU since 2007) or which did not have a quota.

The modus operandi might be that a company that is not registered in the EU F-gas registry and thus not known to the authorities as a company involved in HFC trade, sends HFCs in transit through the EU which might get “lost” during transit. Such a company cannot be identified by the F-gas competent authorities, does not have reporting obligations, and is not subject to inspections.

The illegally imported HFCs were not released in Poland. The consignee was informed that they should get registered, but they refused. Subsequently, the HFCs were shipped in transit to Lithuania, which was informed about the infringement. The Polish F-gas competent authority was informed about the case because of its competence to impose penalties.

18) Romania: Seven seizures of illegal HFC shipments during the period May-August 2020. In total, 76,165 kg of illicit refrigerant gases were seized. OLAF alerted the Directorate General of Customs in Romania, the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests and the National Environmental Guard, to prevent the shipments from reaching the EU market. The shipments were stopped at the border.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
May-August 2020 (7 cases)	4,750 cylinders	None	76,165 kg (HFC-134a, HFC-404A, HFC-407C, HFC-507)

Seven seizures of illegal HFC shipments in Medgidia port/Romania during the period May-August 2020

From May August 2020, Romanian authorities, based on intelligence provided by OLAF, prevented illegal imports of HFCs into the EU market. In total, 76,165 kg of illicit refrigerant gases were seized. The imports included R-134a, R404-a, R407-C and R-507. The seizures took place near the Medgidia port / Romania on 25 May, 18 June, 19 June (2 seizures), 30 June, 16 July 2020, and 11 August 2020. This amount of high-global warming HFCs corresponds to approximately 170,000 CO2-equivalent tons if released into the atmosphere.

OLAF investigators had been monitoring a suspicious shipment from China that had been discharged in Türkiye, removed from its container, and re-routed by truck to the EU. The customs documents accompanying several shipments revealed that they were destined for five different consignees in Romania. Four of the consignees were not registered in the EU F-gas registry, while the fifth one would have significantly exceeded its import quota for 2020. In addition, in most cases, the refrigerant was packaged in non-refillable cylinders, which are banned in the EU.

OLAF alerted the Directorate General of Customs in Romania, which in turn liaised with the Ministry of Environment, Waters, and Forests as well as with the National Environmental Guard, to prevent the shipments from reaching the EU market. The illegal trade was detected by cross-checking the customs data with the EU F-gas portal (showing registered importers and allocated quota) and through physical inspection of the shipments to identify the type and quality of the refrigerant cylinders shipped. In most cases, the importer was not registered in the EU F-gas registry and in one case the import would have exceeded the allocated quota.

The shipments were stopped at the border and the refrigerant was re-exported to the country of origin. Court cases were initiated and penalties of 6,000 Euros were imposed.



Photo of an illegal HFC shipment near Medgidia port/Romania

19) Romania: Romanian Customs Office of Otopeni, near Bucharest, stopped a shipment of 1,100 refrigerant cylinders containing 11,000 kg of HFC-404A. The HFCs were imported without quota and the importer was not registered for the import of HFCs.

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
7 October 2020	1,100 cylinders	None	11,000 kg of HFC-404A

Seizure of an HFC-404A shipment in Otopeni / Romania on 7 October 2020

On 7 October 2020, the Romanian Customs Office of Otopeni, near Bucharest, stopped a shipment of 1,100 refrigerant cylinders containing 11,000 kg of HFC-404A. The shipment was arriving via Türkiye.

OLAF had sent an alert based on an analysis of transit shipments cross-checking customs data with those available from the EU F-gas registry (showing registered importers and allocated quota). The consignee was an importer of fruit and vegetables and was not registered for the import of HFCs into the EU.

Romanian Customs jointly with the National Environmental Guard conducted a physical inspection of the truck to identify the type and quality of refrigerants in the cylinders shipped. The HFCs were imported without quota and the importer was not registered for the import of HFCs. The seized HFC-404A was re-exported and a fine of 6,000 Euros was imposed.

20) Spain: “Operation Fluoris” in Atarfe (Granada) and Alhama de Murcia (Murcia) in June 2020 resulted in the seizure of 889 non-refillable refrigerant cylinders which were hidden inside a maritime container at the premises of a car repair shop in Alhama de Murcia without proper security measures. Another 996 cylinders were seized in a secret warehouse of a service company in Atarfe (Granada).

Seizure cases / dates	Number of seized cylinders	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
2 cases - June 2020	889 cylinders 996 cylinders	Not known	HFC-134a, HFC-410A, HFC-507, HFC-407C, HCFC-22, HFC-32, HFC-437A, HFO-1234yf, HFC/HFO-452A, HFC-407H

“Operation Fluoris” in Atarfe (Granada) and Alhama de Murcia (Murcia) in June 2020

Officials from the Customs Surveillance Area of Murcia requested the Civil Guard's Nature Protection Service to assist in the surveillance and investigation of an alleged contraband crime related to fluorinated gases, explosives, and other agents. A company in Alhama de Murcia had imported a huge number of non-refillable refrigerant cylinders containing fluorinated gases from China. The placing on the market of such cylinders is banned in the EU since 2007. They were sold to car repair shops servicing/refilling refrigeration or air-conditioning devices.

A huge number of non-refillable refrigerant cylinders (889 cylinders) were discovered inside a maritime container at the premises of a car repair shop in Alhama de Murcia without proper security measures. They were seized and made available to the court.

Based on the commercial activities of the service company, the supplier of the refrigerant cylinders could be identified, and a secret warehouse was discovered in Atarfe (Granada). There were many cylinders awaiting commercialization. Some of them contained the refrigerant R-22 which is banned in the EU since January 2015.

The safety data sheets indicated that R-22 is an ozone-depleting substance destroying the protective ozone layer in the stratosphere. The illegal goods (996 non-refillable cylinders) were seized and presented to the court as evidence.

The shipment route was from China through Romania (Bucharest) to Spain to supply car repair shops. In total, 1,885 non-refillable cylinders were seized. Some of the cylinders were empty and others contained fluorinated gases including HFC-134a, HFC-410A, HFC-507, HFC-407C, HCFC-22, HFC-32, HFC-437A, HFO-1234yf, HFC/HFO-452A, HFC-407H.

A delivery note from Bucharest/Romania was discovered which referred to a shipment of 1,020 refrigerant cylinders with a total weight of 20,400 kg. It declared a shipment of 17 pallets with tetrafluoromethane cylinders without specifying the type of cylinders (refillable or non-refillable). Tetrafluoromethane or R-14 is not an ozone-depleting gas and therefore not controlled under the Montreal Protocol. The shipment papers were incorrect.

Court cases were initiated (alleged smuggling, commercialization of prohibited goods, tax evasion, environmental crime, worker’s safety, etc.). Several people involved in the crime were investigated and arrested.



Photo of “Operation Fluoris” in Atarfe (Granada) and Alhama de Murcia (Murcia) in June 2020

21) Spain: “Operation Raecash” and “Operation Redivivus” resulted in the discovery of illegal venting of 100 MT of CFC/HCFCs by a waste management facility in Andalusia, the illegal export of 590 MT of waste to Pakistan, and illegal venting of refrigerant by a recycling company of end-of-life vehicles in Catalonia, Madrid.

Illegal venting, export of hazardous waste and other illegal activities which took place in the past			
July 2020	None	None	100 metric tons of CFCs and HFCs illegally vented
Feb-Dec 2020	None	None	589,9 metric tons of hazardous waste illegally exported
2019-2020	None	None	56,688 CO2-equiv. tons illegally vented (mainly HFC-134a)

“Operation Raecash” in a waste management facility in Aznalcollar (Seville) in July 2020

There is only one waste management facility in Andalusia that is authorized to treat electrical appliances containing ozone-depleting substances. Investigations revealed that the ozone-depleting substances – mainly CFCs and HFCs - were not recovered but directly released into the atmosphere. The waste originated from Andalusia/Spain and Gibraltar / UK and was transported through Algeciras to the waste management facility in Aznalcollar (Seville).

The main issue was the release of more than 25 tons of refrigerant gases into the atmosphere each year, which contribute to ozone layer depletion and thus pose a risk to human health and the environment. The emission of refrigerants from refrigerators, air-conditioners, and other appliances totaled over 100 metric tons of greenhouse and ozone-depleting substances. In addition, another hazardous waste was not treated properly posing a risk to the health of the company’s workers and the environment. According to an expert report provided by the Guardia Civil, the damage caused by the illegal release of harmful gases into the atmosphere has been valued between 7 and 8 million euros. Shipment papers for allegedly recovered refrigerant gases to other plants for the alleged treatment in line with environmental regulations were falsified.

The Nature Protection Service of the Civil Guard in Seville (SEPRONA) arrested six managers of the waste treatment facility and investigated four workers for their involvement in crimes against the environment and natural resources, illegal cross-border waste shipment, violations of workers' rights, fraud, document forgery, misappropriation of documents, mismanagement of funds, and money laundry, among others. In total, ten people were charged with environmental crimes, fraud, corporate crimes, unfair administration, misappropriation, and money laundering. Photos have been provided as supporting documents.

“Operation Redivivus” in Alicante, Valencia, Murcia, Almerá, Málaga, Albacete, Ciudad Real, and Mallorca from February to December 2020

In February 2020, the inspection of a waste management company for electronic and electrical waste (including refrigerators, air-conditioning systems, and compressors) revealed improper waste management practices which were not in line with applicable regulations and standards. Subsequently, 43 other waste management companies in the provinces of Alicante, Valencia, Murcia, Almerá, Málaga, Albacete, Ciudad Real, and Mallorca were inspected to trace the waste streams.

Refrigerants containing appliances and contaminated compressors were found at the premises of numerous companies and in the possession of individuals who did not have the required authorization to treat end-of-life electronic and electrical waste.

Tracing the purchase, sale, and shipment of electronic and electrical waste was difficult because the relevant documents did not refer to the correct LER/WEE codes or the description required by legislation. Following the inspections, 15,019 compressors (133,830 kg) were discovered. They contained R-12, R-22, R134a, R-407A, R-410A, or R-404A and were either commercialized or decontaminated. They were not seized.

Documents provided evidence of the export of 1,015,065 kg of compressors to Karachi in Pakistan, of which 589,901 kg did not have a decontamination certificate confirming the removal of refrigerant and oil. The competent authorities were not informed. Possibly, 35,385 CO₂-equivalent tons were emitted into the atmosphere.

Contaminated compressors are hazardous waste and should be labeled accordingly. In many cases, they were labeled as non-hazardous waste thus avoiding stricter controls (including trade controls).

Often compressors were shipped from the ports of Valencia and Cartagena to third countries for so-called “valorization”. The concealment method was sending hazardous waste s non-hazardous waste together with decontaminated compressors from authorized companies.

Criminal investigations were carried out and 22 (out of 43) waste management companies were accused of environmental crime, improper management and commercialization of refrigerators, air-conditioning systems, and compressors, and the export of hazardous waste as non-hazardous waste in violation of the EU regulations on waste shipments. The case has been referred to the prosecutor for urban planning and the environment in Alicante. No supporting documents were provided.

Illegal venting of refrigerants from end-of-life vehicles in Catalonia, Madrid, and the Basque Country in 2019/2020

In 2019, the Chief Public Prosecutor for the Protection of Environment and Urban Planning, ordered the Civil Guards Unit specialized in the protection of the environment (SEPRONA) an investigation of cases of illegal and inadequate management of motor vehicles at the end of their useful life. The investigation targeted 30 vehicle treatment centers (and 68 people) operating in the Autonomous Communities of Catalonia, Madrid, and the Basque Country and continued in 2020.

According to the legislation in force, CFCs, HFCs, or HFO refrigerants must be recovered from air-conditioning systems of end-of-life vehicle gases before scrapping and managed in an environmentally sound manner (no venting). Vehicle owners must receive documentation from authorized vehicle treatment centers proving that the waste has been properly managed (recovery, recycling, disposal).

In their reports, the companies had declared zero or near zero amounts of recovered refrigerant R12 and R134a. The refrigerant was illegally vented. The investigation revealed illegal refrigerant emissions into the atmosphere equivalent to 56,688 CO₂-equivalent tonnes. The Public Prosecution Service brought 26 (out of 30) companies to court. So far, no court decisions or penalties have been issued. A list of companies that illegally vented refrigerants from end-of-life vehicles and examples of accusation documents were provided as supporting documents.





Photos of “Operation Raecash” in a waste management facility in Aznalcollar (Seville) in July 2020

22) Uzbekistan: Uzbekistan reported 31 seizures of 608 refrigerant cylinders containing 5,440 kg of HCFC-22 as well as 215 pieces of equipment.

Seizure cases/dates	Number of seized containers	Number of seized equipment	Amount and type of seized substance
1) 1 August 2019	None	1 ice cream machine	HCFC-22
2) 13 August 2019	None	1 air-cooled condenser	HCFC-22
3) 9 August 2019	None	20 air dryers	HCFC-22
4) 10 October 2019	None	75 ice cream machines	HCFC-22
5) 25 October 2019	None	1 ice cream machine	HCFC-22
6) 25 October 2019	None	1 dehumidifier	HCFC-22
7) 4 October 2019	None	2 chillers	HCFC-22
8) 27 November 2019	None	1 chiller	HCFC-22
9) 6 November 2019	None	1 chiller	HCFC-22
10) 6 November 2019	None	7 air dryers	HCFC-22
11) 15 November 2019	None	1 chiller	HCFC-22
12) 20 November 2019	None	2 ice cream machines	HCFC-22
13) 28 January 2020	None	2 air-conditioners	HCFC-22
14) 22 January 2020	None	1 chiller	HCFC-22
15) 14 January 2020	None	1 chiller	HCFC-22
16) 21 November 2020	200 cylinders	None	2,720 kg of HCFC-22
17) 2 March 2020	None	4 chillers	HCFC-22
18) 26 June 2020	None	2 chillers	HCFC-22
19) 21 January 2020	200 cylinders	None	2,720 kg of HCFC-22
20) 2 March 2020	None	4 chillers	HCFC-22
21) 2019-2020 (6 cases)	None	70 products	Not known
22) Aug 2019- Jan 2020	None	5 refrigerators	Not known
23) 8 January 2020	200 cylinders	None	HCFC-22
24) June 1019	None	6 refrigerators	Not known
		1 air-conditioner	Not known
25) 10 June 2019	8 cylinders	None	HCFC-22
26) Aug 2019-Jan 2020	None	5 refrigerators	Not known
		1 air-conditioner	Not known
Total			
31 cases	608 containers	215 pieces	5,440 kg of HCFC-22

1) Seizure of one ice cream machine at the Customs Checkpoint “Sergeli”/Tashkent on 1 August 2019

The importer stated that the machine contained HFC-134a. However, upon investigation, it was found to have been designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by road. The machine was stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of one ice cream machine at the customs post in Sergeli/Tashkent on 1 August 2019

2) Seizure of one air-cooled condenser at the Customs Checkpoint “Chukursay”/Tashkent on 13 August 2019

The importer did not specify the type of refrigerant. However, the condenser was designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by train. The condenser was stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.

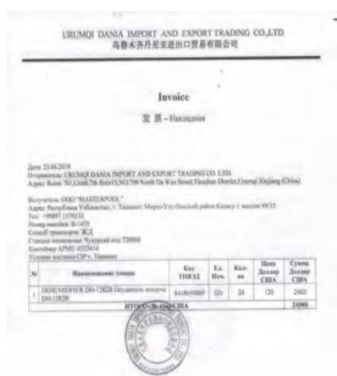


Seizure of one air-cooled condenser at the customs post in Chukursay/Tashkent on 13 August 2019

3) Seizure of 20 air dryers at the Customs Checkpoint “Chukursay”/Tashkent on 9 August 2019

The importer did not indicate the type of refrigerant. However, the air dryers were designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. The country of origin was China, and they were transported

by train. The air dryers were stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of 20 air dryers at the customs post in Chukursay/Tashkent on 9 August 2019

4) Seizure of 75 ice cream machines at the Customs Checkpoint “Chukursay”/Tashkent on 10 October 2019

The importer stated that the machines contained HFC-404A. However, they were designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. The country of origin was China, and they were transported by train. The ice cream machines were stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of 75 ice cream machines at the customs post in Chukursay/Tashkent on 10 October 2019

5) Seizure of one ice cream machine at the Customs Checkpoint “Tashkent-Commodity” on 25 October 2019

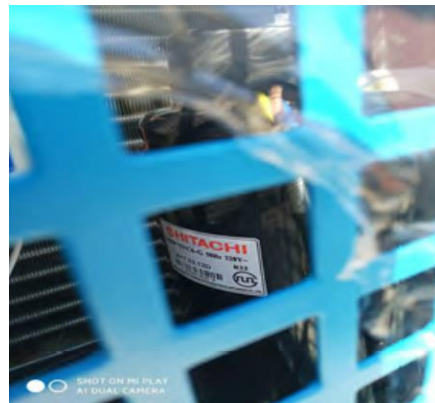
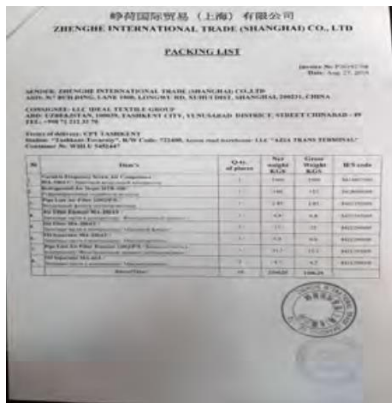
The importer stated that the machine contained HFC-404A. However, it was designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by road. The ice cream machine was stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of one ice cream machine at the customs post “Tashkent-commodity” on 25 October 2019

6) Seizure of one dehumidifier at the Customs Checkpoint “Tashkent-Commodity” on 25 October 2019

The importer did not indicate the type of refrigerant. However, the dehumidifier was designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by road. The dehumidifier was stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of one dehumidifier at the customs post “Tashkent-commodity” on 25 October 2019

7) Seizure of two chillers at the Customs Checkpoint “Sergeli” / Tashkent on 4 October 2019

The importer stated that the chillers contained different refrigerants. However, they were designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. The country of origin was China, and they were transported by train. The chillers were stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of two chillers at the customs post in Sergeli/Tashkent on 4 October 2019

8) Seizure of one chiller at the Customs Checkpoint “Sergeli”/Tashkent on 27 November 2019

The importer stated that the chillers contained HFC-410A. However, it was designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by road. The chiller was stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of one chiller at the customs post in Sergeli / Tashkent on 27 November 2019

9) Seizure of one chiller at the Customs Checkpoint “Sergeli”/Tashkent on 6 November 2019

The importer stated that the chiller contained HFC-407C. However, it was designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. Testing the refrigerant with a Mastercool analyzer showed HCFC-22. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by train. The chiller was stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of one chiller at the customs post in Sergeli/Tashkent on 6 November 2019

10) Seizure of seven air-dryers at the Customs Checkpoint “Sergeli”/Tashkent on 6 November 2019

The importer stated that the air dryers contained HFC-134a. However, they were designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. The country of origin was China, and they were transported by train. The air dryers were stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of seven air dryers at the customs post in Sergeli/Tashkent on 6 November 2019

11) Seizure of one chiller at the Customs Checkpoint "Tashkent-Commodity" on 15 November 2019

The importer did not specify the type of refrigerant. However, the chiller was designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by road. The chiller was stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of one chiller at the customs post in "Tashkent-commodity" on 15 November 2019

12) Seizure of two ice cream machines at the Customs Checkpoint “Ark-Bulak”/Tashkent on 20 November 2019

The importer stated that the machines contained HFC-404A. However, they were designed to use CFC-12, HCFC-22, or R-502 and contained HCFC-22. The country of origin was Italy, and they were transported by road. The ice cream machines were stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of two ice cream machines at the customs post in Ark-Bulak / Tashkent on 20 November 2019

13) Seizure of two air-conditioners at the Customs Checkpoint "Tashkent-Commodity" on 28 January 2020

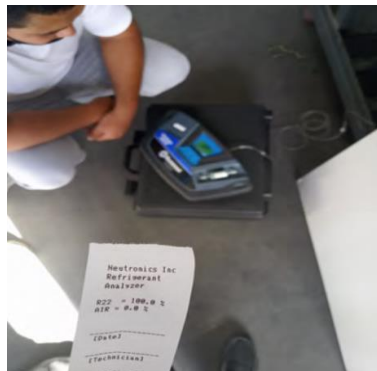
The importer stated that the air-conditioners contained HFC-134a. However, they were designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. The country of origin was China, and they were transported by road. The air-conditioners were stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of two air-conditioners at the customs post "Tashkent-commodity" on 28 January 2020

14) Seizure of one chiller at the Customs Checkpoint “Chukursay”/Tashkent on 22 January 2020

The importer stated that the chiller contained substance R-134a. However, it was designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. Testing the refrigerant with a Mastercool analyzer showed HCFC-22. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by train. The chiller was stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of one chiller at the Customs Checkpoint “Chukursay”/Tashkent on 22 January 2020

15) Seizure of one chiller at the Customs Checkpoint “Chukursay”/Tashkent on 14 January 2020

The importer stated that the chiller contained HFC-417A. However, it was designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. Testing the refrigerant with a Mastercool analyzer showed HCFC-22. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by train. The chiller was stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of one chiller at the Customs Checkpoint “Chukursay”/Tashkent on 14 January 2020

16) Seizure of 200 HCFC-22 refrigerant cylinders at the Customs Checkpoint “Ark-Bulak”/Tashkent on 21 November 2020

Each refrigerant cylinder contained 13.6 kg of HCFC-22 – in total 200 cylinders containing 2,720 kg of HCFC-22. The shipment documents were not correct, and HCFC-22 was not listed in the cargo documents. The refrigerant cylinders were mislabeled HFC-134a. However, testing the refrigerant with a Mastercool analyzer showed HCFC-22. The country of origin was China, and they were transported by road. The refrigerant cylinders were stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. An administrative procedure under the Administrative Code of Uzbekistan was initiated and a verbal warning was issued to the importer.

17) Seizure of four chillers at the Customs Checkpoint “Chukursay”/Tashkent on 2 March 2020

The importer stated that the chillers contained HFC-407C. However, they were designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what it contained. Testing the refrigerant with a Mastercool analyzer showed HCFC-22. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by train. The chillers were stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of four chillers at the Customs Checkpoint “Chukursay”/Tashkent on 2 March 2020

18) Seizure of two chillers at the Customs Checkpoint "Tashkent-Commodity" on 26 June 2020

The importer confirmed that the chillers contained HCFC-22. Testing the refrigerant with a Mastercool analyzer showed HCFC-22. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by road. The chillers were stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of two chillers at the Customs Checkpoint "Tashkent-Commodity" on 26 June 2020

19) Seizure of 200 HCFC-22 refrigerant cylinders at the Customs Checkpoint “Ark-Bulak”/Tashkent on 21 January 2020

Each refrigerant cylinder contained 13.6 kg of HCFC-22 – in total 200 cylinders containing 2,720 kg of HCFC-22. The importer stated they contained HFC-134a. However, inspection confirmed that they contained HCFC-22. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by road. The HCFC-22 cylinders were stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of 200 HCFC-22 refrigerant cylinders at the Customs Checkpoint “Ark-Bulak”/Tashkent on 21 January 2020

20) Seizure of four water-cooler chillers at the Customs Checkpoint “Chukursay”/ Tashkent on 2 March 2020

The importer stated that the chillers contained HFC-407C. However, inspection confirmed that they were designed to use HCFC-22 and which is what they contained. The country of origin was China, and it was transported by train. The chillers were stored in the customs warehouse before being shipped back. A verbal warning was issued to the importer.



Seizure of four water-cooler chillers at the Customs Checkpoint “Chukursay”/ Tashkent on 2 March 2020

21) Seizure of 70 products in the Fergana region during the period 2019-2020

Senior Inspector detected 70 illegal products on 6 occasions in Fergana Province. The goods originated from China and Kyrgyzstan. There were no transport documents. The goods were concealed in the cabin or the luggage compartment of vehicles, or they took bypass roads. They were confiscated. Administrative procedures were initiated and fines in the order of 5-10 minimum salaries were imposed. No supporting documents were provided.

22) Seizure of five refrigerators at the Customs Checkpoint “Sariosiyo” during the period August 2019 – January 2020

First Lieutenant detected five refrigerators at the Customs Border Compound “Sariosiyo.” Private people were crossing the border by foot and had no documents proving the origin of the refrigerators. They were confiscated. Administrative procedures were initiated and fines in the order of 1-3 minimum salaries were imposed. Supporting photos are attached.



Seizure of five refrigerators at the Customs Checkpoint “Sariosiyo” during the period August 2019 – January 2020

23) Seizure of 200 HCFC-22 refrigerant cylinders at Customs Checkpoint "Ark-Bulak" on 8 January 2020

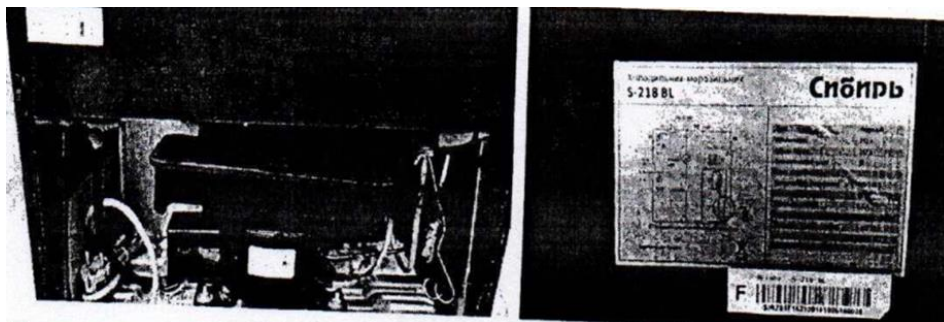
Inspector detected 200 HCFC-22 refrigerant cylinders at Customs Checkpoint "Ark-Bulak" on 8 January 2020. The cargo arrived from China and the shipment papers indicated HFC-410A. The importer submitted an electronic cargo declaration for customs processing for “temporary storage.” The risk management system directed the cargo to the red channel, thus triggering a physical customs inspection. It turned out that the cylinders were labeled HFC-134a which was not in line with the shipment papers. Testing of the refrigerant with the refrigerant identifier “Mastercool ID pro” indicated refrigerant HCFC-22. The import of HCFC-22 is subject to quota and requires special permission. The cylinders were temporarily stored in the customs warehouse until they were returned to the shipper. Fines were imposed.



Seizure of 200 HCFC-22 refrigerant cylinders at Customs Checkpoint "Ark-Bulak"
on 8 January 2020

24) Seizure of six refrigerators and one air-conditioner at the Customs Checkpoint "Sariosiyo" in June 2019

Inspector detected six refrigerators and one air-conditioner at the Customs Border Compound "Sariosiyo" in June 2019. Private people were crossing the border by foot and had no documents proving the origin of the refrigerators. They were confiscated. Administrative procedures were initiated and fines in the order of 3-5 minimum salaries were imposed. Supporting photos are attached.



Seizure of six refrigerators and one air-conditioner at the Customs Checkpoint "Sariosiyo" in June
2019

25) Seizure of eight HCFC-22 refrigerant cylinders at Customs Checkpoint "Chukursay" on 10 June 2019

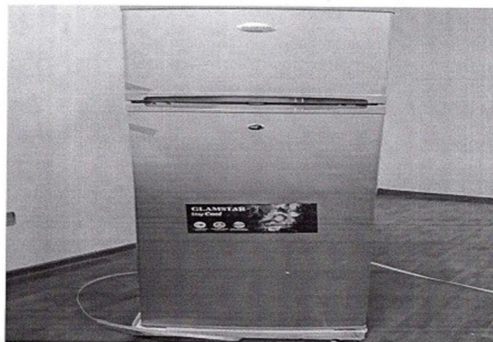
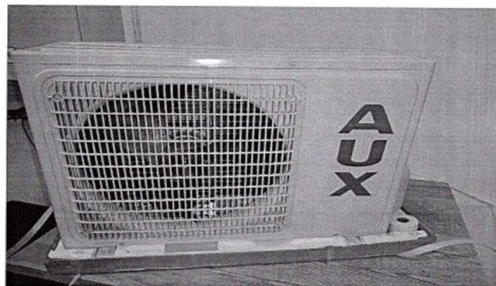
Senior Inspector detected eight refrigerant cylinders at Customs Checkpoint "Chkursoy" on 10 June 2019. They were part of a shipment of a dismantled industrial refrigeration system that came from China via Kazakhstan. The cylinders contained HCFC-22 and were not declared in the shipment papers. The cylinders were temporarily stored in the customs warehouse until they were returned to the shipper. Fines were imposed. Supporting photos are attached.



Seizure of eight HCFC-22 refrigerant cylinders at Customs Checkpoint “Chukursay”
on 10 June 2019

26) Seizure of five refrigerators and one air-conditioner at the Customs Checkpoint “Sariosiyo” during the period August 2019 – January 2020

Senior Inspector detected five refrigerators and one air-conditioner at the Customs Border Compound “Sariosiyo” during the period August 2019 – January 2020. Private people were crossing the border by foot and had no documents proving the origin of the refrigerators. They were confiscated. Administrative procedures were initiated and fines in the order of 1-3 minimum salaries were imposed. Supporting photos are attached.



Seizure of five refrigerators and one air-conditioner at the Customs Checkpoint “Sariosiyo”
during the period August 2019 – January 2020

Seizure statistics

Seizure case description	Seizure country	Seizure date	Number of seizures	Number of seized cylinders	Number of seized equipment	Amount of seized substance / kg	Type of seized substance
Bulgaria	Bulgaria	05-May-20	1	20	None	218,0	HFC-404A
				20		272,0	HFC-134a
Bulgaria	Bulgaria	05-Jun-19	1	20	None	196,0	HFC-404A
				30		408,0	HFC-134a
Bulgaria	Bulgaria	14-Jan-20	1	100	None	1.200,0	HFC-134a
				866		11.777,6	HFC-134a
Bulgaria	Bulgaria	10-Dec-19	1	5	None	35,0	HFC-32
				55		599,5	HFC-404A
Georgia	Georgia	23-Jan-19	1	17	None	272,0	HCFC-22
				2		32,0	CFC-11
Georgia	Georgia	12-Apr-19	1	2	None	32,0	HCFC-22
Netherlands	Netherlands	16-Jun-20	1	1.400	None	7.480,0	HFC-134a
						3.270,0	HFC-404A
						1.695,0	HFC-410A
						1.500,0	HFC-32
OLAF	Italy	05-Feb-20	1	1.098	None	4.060,0	HFC-134a
						6.570,0	HFC-410A
						1.720,0	HFC-404A
OLAF	Netherlands	15-Jun-20	1	550	None	13.945,0	HFC-134a
				150			HFC-410A
				300			HFC-404A
				150			HFC-32
OLAF	Romania	25-May-20	1	Not known	None	13.350,0	HFCs
OLAF	Romania	18-Jun-20	1	Not known	None	13.440,0	HFCs
OLAF	Romania	19-Jun-20	1	Not known	None	13.350,0	HFCs
OLAF	Romania	19-Jun-20	1	1.034	None	9.512,5	HFC-404A
OLAF	Romania	30-Jun-20	1	Not known	None	13.440,0	HFCs
OLAF	Romania	16-Jul-20	1	Not known	None	3.560,0	HFC-507
OLAF	Romania	11-Aug-20	1	1.034	None	9.512,5	HFCs
OLAF	Italy	23-Sep-20	1	300	None	1.400,0	HFC-134a
						700,0	HFC-410A
						1.100,0	HFC-404A
						500,0	HFC-32
OLAF	Poland	31-Dec-20	1	7	None	129.710,0	HFC-404A
OLAF	Romania	7-Oct-20	1	1.100	None	11.000,0	HFC-404A
OLAF	Romania	10-Nov-20	1	600	None	1.020,0	HFCs
OLAF	Romania	18-Nov-20	1	Not known	None	25.500,0	HFCs
OLAF	Bulgaria	21-Aug-20	1	Not known	None	2.060,0	HFCs
OLAF	Germany	05-Nov-20	1	Not known	None	6.000,0	HFCs
OLAF	France	20-Jul-20	1	Not known	None	3.972,0	HFCs
OLAF	France	29-Sep-20	1	Not known	None	8.000,0	HFCs
OLAF	France	07-Oct-20	1	Not known	None	935,0	HFCs
OLAF	France	21-Nov-20	1	1.140	None	11.400,0	HFCs

Poland	Poland	08-Mar-19	1	1.150	None	2.260,0	HFC-507A
						1.130,0	HFC-410A
						1.695,0	HFC-407C
						3.270,0	HFC-404A
						5.540,0	HFC-134a
Poland	Poland	08-Mar-19	1	972	None	1.650,0	HFC-507A
						1.000,0	HFC-410A
						1.100,0	HFC-407C
						2.450,0	HFC-404A
						4.464,0	HFC-134a
Poland	Poland	21-Dec-20	1	1	None	6.580,0	HFC-404A
Poland	Poland	21-Dec-20	1	1	None	9.230,0	HFC-404A
Spain	Spain	Jun 20	2	889	None	Not known	HFC-134a, HFC-410A, HFC-507, HFC-407C, HCFC-22, HFC-32, HFC-437A, HFO- 1234yf, HFC/HFO- 452A, HFC- 407H
				996	None	Not known	
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	01-Aug-19	1	None	1	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	13-Aug-19	1	None	1	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	09-Aug-19	1	None	20	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	10-Oct-19	1	None	75	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	25-Oct-19	1	None	1	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	25-Oct-19	1	None	1	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	04-Oct-19	1	None	2	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	27-Nov-19	1	None	1	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	06-Nov-19	1	None	1	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	06-Nov-19	1	None	7	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	15-Nov-19	1	None	1	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	20-Nov-19	1	None	2	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	28-Jan-20	1	None	2	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	22-Jan-20	1	None	1	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	14-Jan-20	1	None	1	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	21-Nov-20	1	200	None	2.720,0	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	02-Mar-20	1	None	4	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	26-Jun-20	1	None	2	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	21-Jan-20	1	200	None	2.720,0	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	02-Mar-20	1	None	4	None	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	2019-2020	6	None	70	None	Not known
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	Aug 19-Jan 20	1	None	5	None	Not known
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	08-Jan-20	1	200	None	Not known	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	Jun 19	1	None	7	None	Not known
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	10-Jun-19	1	8	None	Not known	HCFC-22
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	Aug 19-Jan 20	1	None	6	None	Not known
Total			64	14.617	215	380.553,1	

Illegal trade in HFCs and hazardous waste and illegal venting detected

Seizure case description	Country	Date	Illegal activity	Number of cylinders	Number of equipment	Amount of substance / kg	Type of substance
Poland	Poland	2019-2020	Illegal imports of HFCs	1,215	None	14,580	HFC-134a
Poland	Poland	2019-2020	Illegal imports of HFCs	1,586	None	16,608	HFC-410A
Spain	Spain	Jul 2020	Illegal venting of refrigerants	N.a.	N.a.	[100,000]	HFCs
Spain	Spain	Feb-Dec 2020	Illegal export of hazardous waste	N.a.	N.a.	589,900	Hazard. waste
Spain	Spain	2019-2020	Illegal venting of refrigerants	N.a.	N.a.	[56,688,000]	CO2 equiv. kg
Total				2,801	None	621,088	

Report on informal Prior Informed Consent (iPIC) consultations (2019 – 2020)

Countries involved	Case description	Avoided trade	
		Reason for rejection	Avoided in kg
China >>> European Union	The iPIC consultation of 10 July 2020 between China and the European Union resulted in the rejection of a licensing request for the shipment of 20,000 kg of halon-1301 from China to the European Union for feedstock use. The European Commission asked China whether this licence was the same as the one which China had shared on 11 May 2020, because both licenses included the same data (companies, ODS, net mass, use). China confirmed that it was the same import licence, and therefore they did not issue the export permit since a single license cannot be used twice.	Same import license used twice	20,000
China >>> European Union	The iPIC consultation of 6 January 2020 between China and European Union resulted in the rejection of a licensing application for the export of 20,000 kg of HCFC-22 from China to the European Union for use in refrigeration. According to Article 15.2 (e) of the Regulation (EC) No 1005/2009 on substances that deplete the ozone layer, HCFCs cannot be imported into the European Union after 31 December 2019. Derogations are possible for laboratory and analytical and feedstock uses.	Ban on HCFC imports into EU	20,000
China >>> Russia	The iPIC consultation of 5 November 2019 between China and the Russian Federation resulted in the rejection of a licensing application for the export of 9,250 kg of HCFC-141b from China to the Russian Federation for foam blowing. The competent authority in Russia replied that the Russian importer was not authorized to import ODS. Accordingly, the export license was not issued.	Importer not authorized to import ODS	9,250
China >>> Turkmenistan	The iPIC consultation of 11 May 2020 between China and Turkmenistan resulted in the rejection of a licensing application for the shipment of 12,240 kg of HCFC-22 from China to Turkmenistan for use in refrigeration. The Turkmen importer did not receive either a license or a quota for importation of HCFCs from the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection. The import license presented to the Chinese authorities was fake (signature, seal, ministry name). The Turkmen Ozone Unit requested China not to issue the export license thus this unwanted trade was prevented. Accordingly,	Fake import license	12,240

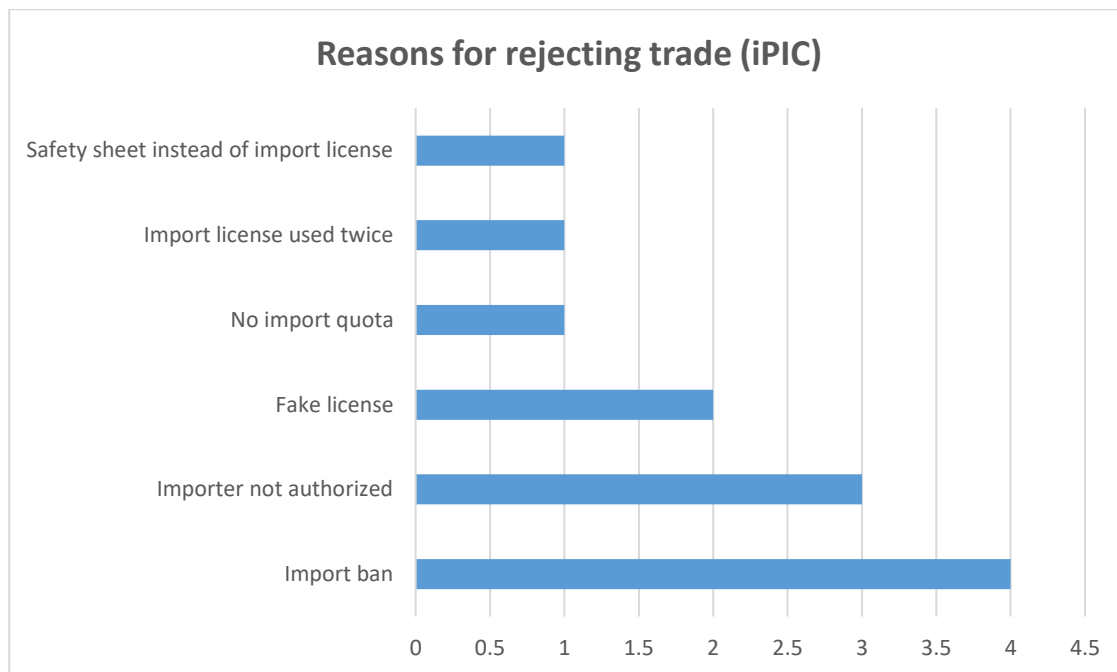
	China did not issue the export license. An administrative procedure was applied to the Turkmen importer not allowing him to import HCFC-22 during a 2-year period.		
China >>> Turkmenistan	The iPIC consultation of 22 June 2020 between China and Turkmenistan resulted in the rejection of a licensing application for the import of 1,360 kg of HCFC-22 from China to Turkmenistan for use in refrigeration. The Turkmen importer did not receive either a license or an import quota from the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection. The document presented to the Chinese authorities was a safety sheet and not an import permission. The Turkmen Ozone Office requested China not to issue the export license, thus an unwanted trade was prevented.	Safety sheet instead of import license presented	1,360
China >>> Ukraine	The iPIC consultation of 23 September 2020 between China and Ukraine resulted in the rejection of a licensing application for the export of 82,000 kg of HCFC-22 from China to Ukraine for use in refrigeration. The Head of Ukraine's Ozone Layer Protection Unit replied that the Ministry did not issue an import license and that the trade was therefore not acceptable. Accordingly, China did not issue the export license and this unwanted trade was prevented. Subsequently, China provided copies of an import license and its translation which was submitted with the application for an export license for verification. Ukraine responded that it is a fake license since import licenses are issued by the Ministry of Economy and not by the Ministry of Environmental Protection. Ukraine provided China with a copy of the format of a genuine import licensing issued by the Ministry of Economy for future reference.	Fake import license	82,000
European Union >>> China	iPIC consultation of 14 July 2020 between European Union and China resulted in the rejection of a licensing application for the export of 0.001 kg (i.e., 1 gram) of CFC-11 from the European Union to China for laboratory and analytical uses. China did not allow the trade because all imports of CFC-11 have been banned since 2001. Although this amount is exceedingly small, this case demonstrates full compliance with import regulations regardless of quantities involved and a zero-tolerance approach for any potential violations.	Ban of CFC imports into China	0.001

European Union >>> China	The iPIC consultation of 16 October 2020 between the European Union and China resulted in the rejection of a licensing application for the export of 0.002 kg of a mixture containing 1,1,1-trichloroethane (1%) and carbon tetrachloride (1%) from the European Union to China for laboratory and analytical uses. China did not allow the trade because the Chinese importer was not a registered company.	Importer not authorized to import ODS	0.002
European Union >>> Indonesia	The iPIC consultation of 18 June 2020 between the European Union and Indonesia resulted in the rejection of a licensing application for the export of 6,000 kg of HCFC-123 from the European Union to Indonesia for fire-fighting use. The Indonesian competent authorities informed that the importer did not have a quota allocation for the import of HCFCs and was thus ineligible.	No import quota allocated	6,000
European Union >>> Malaysia	The iPIC consultation of 25 May 2020 between the European Union and Malaysia resulted in the rejection of a licensing application for the export of 6,000 kg of HCFC-123 from the European Union to Malaysia for fire-fighting use. The Malaysian competent authorities informed that the importer was not a registered trader in controlled substances and thus the trade was not acceptable.	Importer not authorized to import ODS	6,000
European Union >>> Russia	The iPIC consultation of 6 July 2020 between the European Union and the Russian Federation resulted in the rejection of a licensing application for the export of 4,000 kg of halon-1211 from the European Union to the Russian Federation for essential use. The Russian competent authority replied that the import of halon-1211 is banned according to governmental regulation related to ODS imports in 2020. Accordingly, the import license was not issued.	Ban on halon import into Russia	4,000
China >>> North Macedonia	The iPIC consultation of 5 November 2019 between China and North Macedonia resulted in the rejection of a licensing application for the export of 6,800 kg of HCFC-22 in non-refillable cylinders from China to North Macedonia for use in refrigeration. The application for the export license was submitted by a specific Chinese exporter. As North Macedonia has banned the import of refrigerants in non-refillable cylinders, the Manager of the Ozone Unit requested confirmation that the Chinese exporter would use refillable cylinders. The	Ban on import of non-refillable cylinders into North Macedonia	6,800

	China's ODS Import / Export Licensing Office consulted with the exporting company which indicated that it would use non-refillable cylinders. Thus, the intended trade did not comply with the legal requirements in North Macedonia and China did not issue the export license for the Chinese exporter.		
Total		12	167,650

Reasons for rejecting trade (iPIC)

iPIC is an informal and simple mechanism to help enforce ODS/HFC import / export licensing and quota systems and national legislation / bans. Usually, an iPIC consultation consists of an exchange of emails often within a day. There can be different reasons for rejecting a proposed trade.



iPIC statistics

iPIC consultation	Date	HCFC-22	CFC-11	HCFC-123	Halon-1211	HCFC-141b	Halon-1301	Mixture	Total	Use
China-EU	6-Jan-20	20,000							20,000	Refrigeration
EU-Russia	6-Jul-20				4,000				4,000	Essential use
EU-Malaysia	25-May-20			6,000					6,000	Fire-fighting
EU-Indonesia	18-Jun-20			6,000					6,000	Fire-fighting
China-EU	10-Jul-20					20,000			20,000	Feedstock
EU-China	14-Jul-20		0.001						0	Lab. & analyt. uses
China-Turkmenistan	22-Jun-20	1,360							1,360	Refrigeration
China-Turkmenistan	11-May-20	12,240							12,240	Refrigeration
China-North Macedonia	5-Nov-19	6,800							6,800	Refrigeration
China-Russia	5-Nov-19					9,250			9,250	Foam blowing
China-Ukraine	23-Sep-20	82,000							82,000	Refrigeration
EU-China	16-Oct-20							0.002	0	Lab. & analyt. uses
Total		122,400	0.001	12,000	4,000	9,250	20,000	0.002	167,650	

The Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Montreal Protocol Award for Customs and Enforcement Officers aims to provide incentive and recognition to customs and enforcement officers and their respective organizations for successfully preventing illegal / unwanted trade of substances, equipment or products relevant for the implementation of the Montreal Protocol, and promotes national customs services and ozone units.

Nominations of Customs and Enforcement Officers from Bulgaria, China, France, Georgia, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Malaysia, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan as well as the European Commission and OLAF have been validated by the World Customs Organization, the Ozone Secretariat and UNEP Law Division's OzonAction Programme.

In total, 64 seizures were reported during the period 2019-2020: 14,617 refrigerant cylinders / ISO containers with more than 380 metric tons of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), and 215 pieces of equipment.

Informal Prior Informed Consent (iPIC) consultations between ECA countries and their trade partners prior to the issuance of the mandatory export and import licenses avoided 12 unwanted / illegal shipments of more than 167 metric tons of HCFCs and halons during the period 2019-2020.

In addition, Poland detected more than 31 metric tons of illegal HFC imports which had taken place in 2019-2020, and Spain detected illegal venting of more than 100 tons of refrigerants from recycling centers and illegal exports of more than 589 tons of hazardous waste.

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