

Introduction

With the adoption of Regulation (EU) No 517/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 on Fluorinated Greenhouse Gases and Repealing Regulation (EC) No 842/2006 (hereinafter the “EU F-Gas Regulation”),⁽¹⁾ the European Union (EU) has set out an ambitious package of policies designed to reduce hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) emissions.

The EU F-Gas Regulation will compel a large-scale conversion to climate-friendly technologies in new equipment and products by 2030. In the process, it will transform the European economy with implications on producers, importers, distributors, manufacturers, operators, contractors and consumers. The successful implementation of the EU F-Gas Regulation also has implications for future efforts to negotiate and implement an HFC phase-down at the international level. Its phase-down schedule is significantly more ambitious than current amendment proposals to the Montreal Protocol.

There are several publications describing the main provisions of the EU F-Gas Regulation. The European Commission,⁽²⁾ the United Kingdom (UK) government⁽³⁾ and the European Association of Refrigeration, Air Conditioning and Heat Pump Contractors (AREA),⁽⁴⁾ to name a few, have published guidance documents for stakeholders, which also provide useful summaries of the main obligations.

This publication seeks to take the additional step of describing where the HFC phase-down came from and what it means for the new European marketplace. It is intended to serve as a guide for companies and consumers affected by the EU F-Gas Regulation, underscoring the importance of remaining ahead of the curve. It outlines the main impacts, and details why producers, importers, exporters, operators, manufacturers, contractors and national authorities should take early proactive measures to ensure swift implementation.