



Project Implementation Report

(1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024)

Project Title:	Environmentally Sound Management and Final Disposal of PCBs
GEF ID:	5325
UNIDO ID:	140160
GEF Replenishment Cycle:	GEF-5
Country(ies):	Congo
Region:	AFR - Africa
GEF Focal Area:	Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)
Integrated Approach Pilot (IAP) Programs ¹ :	NA
Stand-alone / Child Project:	Stand-alone project
Implementing Department/Division:	ENV / IPM
Co-Implementing Agency:	NA
Executing Agency(ies):	Department of Environment, Ministry of Environment, sustainable development and of the Congo Basin (previously named « Ministry of Tourism and Environment »)
Project Type:	Medium-Sized Project (MSP)
Project Duration:	36
Extension(s):	7
GEF Project Financing:	USD 975,000
Agency Fee:	USD 92,625
Co-financing Amount:	USD 5,009,220
Date of CEO Endorsement/Approval:	4/17/2015
UNIDO Approval Date:	5/26/2015
Actual Implementation Start:	6/17/2015
Cumulative disbursement as of 30 June 2024:	USD 963,922.14
Mid-term Review (MTR) Date:	9/30/2020
Original Project Completion Date:	5/26/2018

¹ Only for GEF-6 projects, if applicable

Project Completion Date as reported in FY23:	12/31/2023
Current SAP Completion Date:	12/31/2023
Expected Project Completion Date:	12/31/2023
Expected Terminal Evaluation (TE) Date:	8/31/2023
Expected Financial Closure Date:	12/31/2024
UNIDO Project Manager²:	Lamia Benabbas

I. Brief description of project and status overview

Project Objective	
The Project aims to establish an environmentally sound management system of PCBs and dispose of 200 tons of PCBs contaminated equipment, oil and waste by strengthening the institutional and technical capacities of the power sector for sound management of chemicals.	
Indicator 3.1 Amount and type of POPs eliminated or reduced	Quantity (tons)
Disposal of PCB contaminated equipment and waste	200 tons

Baseline
Congo carried out pilot inventory projects through bilateral/multilateral cooperation in the context of the Basel Convention and the Stockholm Convention. These preliminary and subsequent inventories helped define further the national profile on PCB management, i.e. amount of equipment, concentration levels, electrical power share, location, economic sectors affected, transformers in use versus abandoned transformers, etc. Following this profile update, the country prepared its National Implementation Plan (NIP) of the Stockholm Convention. However, the implementation of the NIP remains a major challenge due to a lack of technical and financial resources. Targeted results: Following the adoption of the Stockholm Convention, the project supports an update of the national inventory of PCBs and the establishment of a legal framework on POPs, including PCBs management plan, for meeting the country's requirements in terms of technical and institutional capacities as per the Convention provisions. From the initial NIP's PCB inventory results and the observations of the utility –SNE (whose actual name changed for E2C) - maintenance practices, it is expected that the majority of the PCB contaminated equipment would have relatively low contamination levels. Therefore, the final disposal option of this project is the establishment of a domestic solution using non-combustion PCB disposal technology

Please refer to the explanatory note at the end of the document and select corresponding ratings for the current reporting period, i.e. FY24. Please also provide a short justification for the selected ratings for FY24.

In view of the GEF Secretariat's intent to start following the ability of projects to adopt the concept of adaptive management³, Agencies are expected to closely monitor changes that occur from year to year and demonstrate that they are not simply implementing plans but modifying them in response to developments and circumstances or understanding. In order to facilitate with this assessment, please introduce the ratings as reported in the previous reporting cycle, i.e. FY23, in the last column.

² Person responsible for report content

³ Adaptive management in the context of an intentional approach to decision-making and adjustments in response to new available information, evidence gathered from monitoring, evaluation or research, and experience acquired from implementation, to ensure that the goals of the activity are being reached efficiently

Overall Ratings ⁴	FY24	FY23
Global Environmental Objectives (GEOs) / Development Objectives (DOs) Rating	<i>Moderately Satisfactory (MS)</i>	<i>Moderately Satisfactory (MS)</i>
The on-site retrofilling operations of PCB containing transformers (55pcs) have been completed. Good progress was made during the reporting period, however further delays occurred, and the contaminated oil and waste have not yet been exported. Hence, the rating is similar to that of FY23.		
Implementation Progress (IP) Rating	<i>Moderately Satisfactory (MS)</i>	<i>Moderately Satisfactory (MS)</i>
<p>The on-site retrofilling operations of PCB containing transformers have been completed. 55 transformers out of the 62 preselected ones have been retrofilled. The seven units that have not been treated, were not made available by the owners because of their operational priorities.</p> <p>A sound storage site is in place for the project at the Hydrotech site in Pointe-Noire.</p> <p>The process of exporting PCB-contaminated oils started with the request for an identification number to be delivered by the Ministry after an inspection mission to validate the current quantities for exportation and sound elimination overseas according to the Stockholm and Bale conventions requirements on POPs and hazardous waste transportation respectively.</p> <p>Good progress was made during the reporting period, however further delays occurred, and the contaminated oil and waste have not yet been exported. Hence, the rating is similar to that of FY23.</p>		
Overall Risk Rating	<i>Low Risk (L)</i>	<i>Low Risk (L)</i>
The rating is the same as in FY23		

II. Targeted results and progress to-date

Please describe the progress made in achieving the outputs against key performance indicator's targets in the project's **M&E Plan/Log-Frame at the time of CEO Endorsement/Approval**. Please expand the table as needed.

Please fill in the below table or make a reference to any supporting documents that may be submitted as annexes to this report.

Project Strategy	KPIs/Indicators	Baseline	Target level	Progress in FY24
Component 1 – – Legal and institutional framework for sound management of PCBs put in place				
Outcome 1: Legal and institutional framework for sound management of PCBs put in place				
Output 1.1: Existing laws and regulations on the sound management of POPs and PCBs assessed	A report on the gaps between Stockholm Convention requirements and existing legal/regulatory	No national legal framework set up for the sound management of chemicals including persistent organic pollutants (POPs)	1 report	1 report was developed by the project and validated by the Government No additional activity during FY24

⁴ Please refer to the explanatory note at the end of the document and assure that the indicated ratings correspond to the narrative of the report

Output 1.2: Legal frameworks and institutional tools in place to promote the ESM and final disposal of PCBs	<p>Number of environment policies, strategies, laws, regulation approved/enacted (1);</p> <p>Number of new guidelines and tools adopted (1)</p>	Lack of national legal framework and institutional capacities meeting the mandates of Stockholm Convention	1 1	<p>3 legal texts have been drafted and corrected by international experts: (i) for the sound management of PCBs, (ii) for the establishment of a National PCB committee and (iii) for the endorsement of National technical directives. The final versions were submitted for approval to the Ministry cabinet during Q3 2020, which sub-contracted a review by the private cabinet Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) before their injection into the National legislative proceedings.</p> <p>1 technical guidelines report was developed and approved at the national level on January 17, 2019.</p> <p>FY24:</p> <p>During FY2024, the project continued to monitor the adoption of the decree related to technical guidelines on PCB management by Ministry of Environment</p>
Output 1.3 Environmentally sound management of PCB disseminated to stakeholders and public audience at workshops and trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of workshops and trainings (3) Number of training participants/trainees (male/female) (90/30) Number of dissemination materials attentive to gender issues distributed (2 types) 	Total has a comprehensive sounds management programme regarding security and environment on their site in Pointe Noire.	3 workshops (90/ 30) Posters distributed	<p>3 workshops have been organized since the beginning of project as reported in the last PIR. This included an international workshop on "training and validation of the National technical Directives on sound management and elimination of PCB and contaminated materials in Congo" (January 17, 2019, Brazzaville) and a National Workshop on "training of technicians on Best Environmental Practices in maintaining workshops of electrical transformers" (January 15-19, 2020, Pointe-Noire). No additional workshop has been conducted during the current reporting period. This represents 145/25 (m/w) if considering only the workshops and 176/33 if also considering some meetings during field missions 2: 1 flyer and 1 CD with dissemination material + 1 Flash news on TV on the project</p> <p>No additional activity during FY24</p>
Component 2 – – Sound management and final disposal of PCBs contaminated equipment and its waste				
Outcome 2: Sound management and final disposal of PCBs contaminated equipment and its waste				
Output 2.1: PCB Inventory updated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of institutes and companies adopting standard sampling and analytical methods (1) Number of samples collected and analyzed (TBD) PCB inventory as well as transformer maintenance record established and updated Quantity of the following safe-guarded PCB (TBD in tons) 	<p>0 institute</p> <p>1 PCB inventory data carried out in 2006.</p> <p>During the PPG phase of the project, there was no PCB inventory updated using the PCB screening test kits</p> <p>188 transformers were identified as possibly PCB-contaminated equipment, equivalent to about 500 tons, including dielectric oil.</p>	<p>1 institute</p> <p>Number of samples (TBD)</p> <p>PCB and transformer inventory and maintenance record have been established and updated</p> <p>Quantity of PCBs (TBD)</p>	<p>1</p> <p>One PCB and transformer inventory was done in 2017, but during the first sampling campaign, only 223 transformers were sampled (out of 1181, which is 19%) based on selection criteria. The quantity found in 2017 did not reach the project objective of 200 tons of PCB.</p> <p>A complementary campaign was carried out during Q3 and Q4 2019 to sample more transformers suspected to have been contaminated during oil regeneration operations. In total, 1068 transformers were sampled within the two sampling campaigns. This included 345 transformers sampled at E2C operating sites during campaign 2019, while only 247 were sampled during the 2017 sampling campaign.</p> <p>Additional consumables and small equipment was provided by UNIDO to the National Project Unit for carrying out the complementary sampling campaign and associated analysis in the laboratory</p>

				Analysis were performed during Q4 2019 and the inventory was updated with additional contaminated oil and equipment No additional activity during FY24
Output 2.2: Technical guidelines and best practice adopted at the transformer maintenance workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of training and workshops (2) Number of training participants/trainees (male/female) (48/12) Number of technical guidelines adopted (1) Number of companies adopting best practices(2) Number of new businesses(1) Amount of incremental investment (TBD in USD) 	<p>There are big differences among the transformer owners in Congo:</p> <p>Power sector: At E2C (major owner), there are no standardized operational procedures for equipment maintenance adopted and no technical guidelines for sound management of transformer maintenance and no PCB management plan established</p> <p>Petroleum Sector: Total has a comprehensive sounds management programme regarding security and environment on their site in Pointe Noire.</p> <p>Congorep has in place an environmental management system in compliance with all relevant regulatory requirements and with exploration and production (E&P) industry standards.</p>	<p>2 training workshops (48/12)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 technical guideline adopted 2 companies adopting best practice <p>1 new business</p>	<p>1; a national technical guideline on PCB sound management and elimination has been prepared, corrected by international experts and approved by the Ministry of Tourism and Environment and disseminated in Q2 2020.</p> <p>11, This included but is not limited to: E2C (SNE) ; Eni Congo; TOTAL E & P Congo, Perenco Congo ; PAPN ; CORAF ; SARIS Congo and SNPC that either attended the workshops organised by the project or were visited and made aware of the project and its objectives during field visits</p> <p>FY24:</p> <p>During Q4 2023-Q2 2024, three practical on-site trainings were delivered to the beneficiaries by the company contracted for the decontamination and expedition of contaminated oil and equipment for final elimination.</p> <p>During FY24, the project continued to monitor the adoption of the decree related to technical guidelines on PCB management by Ministry of Environment, sustainable development and of the Congo Basin</p>
Output 2.3 Identified PCB contaminated equipment and waste (200 tons) disposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantity of PCB eliminated/discontinued (200 tons) Equivalent CO2 pollution prevented (TBD in tons) Materials recycled (TBD in tons) Commercial value of materials recycled (TBD in USD) 	<p>PCB equipment identified under the possession of international petroleum companies during the original NIP have been already disposed of (including 130 tons by Total E&P Congo and Congo REP since 2011).</p> <p>0 tons of PCB oil, PCB contaminated oil and equipment were disposed of by the other transformer owners including E2C</p>	<p>200 tons</p> <p>All (TBD in tons) material that could be recycled have been sorted, decontaminated, recycled and sold (TBD in USD)</p> <p>Associated (TBD in tons) CO2 pollution that has be prevented is reported</p>	<p>FY24:</p> <p>Decontamination operations started during Q4 2023 in the region of Pointe Noire and continued during Q1 and Q2 2024 in the region of Brazzaville and Bouansa. In total, 55 transformers have been decontaminated, refilled with clean oil, and returned to service.</p> <p>80 tons of equipment decontaminated</p>
Component 3 – Monitoring and Evaluation				
Outcome 3: Monitoring and Evaluation				
Output 3.1: Project results monitored and reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project steering committee established (male/female) (8/2) Project office established with each member's responsibility 		<p>8/2</p> <p>1</p>	<p>1 project steering committee has been established (20 men/4 women)</p> <p>1 project office has been established</p>

	clearly described in job descriptions (1) · Project progress monitored and work plan prepared and updated		· 3 annual reports are ready	8 annual reports submitted over the course of the project implementation period, ensuring close monitoring from UNIDO and other implementation partners
Output 3.2: Project evaluated according to the standards of the GEF	· Evaluation adequately conducted according to the GEF's standard		The mid-term evaluation report and the final evaluation are ready	An international external evaluation expert realized mid-term evaluation report during Q3-Q4 2020 TE was carried out in Q4 2022 as part of a cluster PCB evaluation. The evaluator recommended a project extension to finalize the PCB transformer decontamination (Output 2.3) The project was reopened during Q2 2023 to allow UNIDO to provide further assistance and ensure a smooth finalization of the project operations. FY24: The evaluator has been contracted to update the TE report and include the decontamination operations

III. Project Risk Management

1. Please indicate the overall project-level risks and the related risk management measures: (i) as identified in the CEO Endorsement document, and (ii) progress to-date. Please expand the table as needed.

Describe in tabular form the risks observed and priority mitigation activities undertaken during the reporting period in line with the project document. Note that risks, risk level and mitigations measures should be consistent with the ones identified in the CEO Endorsement/Approval document. Please also consider the project's ability to adopt the adaptive management approach in remediating any of the risks that had been sub-optimally rated (H, S) in the previous reporting cycle.

	(i) Risks at CEO stage	(i) Risk level FY 23	(i) Risk level FY 24	(i) Mitigation measures	(ii) Progress in FY24	New defined risk ⁵
1	Lack of government's commitment due to low prioritization of PCB-related issues in the Ministries and E2C agenda	Low risk (L)	Low risk (L)	During the UNIDO's delegate mission in Feb 2014, two other Ministries and SNE have sent their representatives to the site visits not only in Brazzaville but also in Pointe Noire. Such an involvement of the relevant Ministries and SNE will be secured by having the stakeholders in the decision making flows as well as formally communicating the project progress from the Ministry of Tourism and Environment and Department of Environment.	The relevant ministries and E2C (former SNE) remain committed to the project. They actively participate to the different activities executed to date. Still, mobilization of government co-financing remains a concern, and activities have been delayed due to the reorganization of E2C (former SNE) in 2018, the death of the project coordinator in 2018, and the death of the E2C general Director in February 2019. The project implementation and the commitment of the government has been accelerated since January 2019 with the strong engagement of the Minister of Tourism and Environment and the nomination of a new project coordinator. E2C has provided a co-financing part by covering the costs of its staff and associated travels during the sampling campaign (in 2017 and also in July-August 2019). In Q4 2020, the Minister of Tourism and Environment, Mrs. Soudan-Nonault, wrote a letter to the CEO of E2C to accelerate the implementation of the last project activities related to the final	<input type="checkbox"/>

⁵ New risk added in reporting period. Check only if applicable.

					<p>elimination and decontamination of PCB-contaminated equipment.</p> <p>The government has maintained its long-term engagement regarding the sound management and elimination of PCBs in Congo. The project coordinator has been following closely the project with both the government and E2C to ensure its smooth implementation and a total of 55 transformers have been decontaminated.</p>	
2	Government officials are either not willing or not available to participate to training activities and lawmaking/regulatory bodies are not responsive to recommendations	Low risk (L)	Low risk (L)	<p>Government officials are closely involved in project planning so that the new regulations are practical and meeting the needs at the national and communal levels</p> <p>Relevant stakeholders are invited as steering committee members and closely informed of the project's needs on the new regulations</p> <p>High level government officials are kept aware of the progress of the project and training activities for their officers</p>	<p>The technical workshop organized on October 2016 to discuss the draft new decree on ESM of PCBs shows this risk did not materialize, as officials of different government departments attended the meeting and participated to the debate. A team of national legal experts have been hired by the NEA to address the comments and oppositions to a number of provisions in the drafted legal text. The Minister of Tourism and Environment personally opened the international workshop on the validation of National guidelines in January 2019 and has monitored the implementation of the activities with the National team. The E2C created in Q2 2021 a technical comity on the company's environmental and social responsibility to better respond to the project's technical requirements and, in general, to future requirements linked to PCB sound management. A mission to prepare the project beneficiaries was carried out in Q1 (June) 2022. It aimed at informing the beneficiaries on the security measures and operations that will be carried out during the decontamination of their equipment. It also aimed at agreeing on a power-down plan for the in-use transformer during decontamination operations.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	There could be delays in development and adoption of proposed laws, regulations, and technical guidelines	Modest risk (M)	Modest risk (M)	<p>Project staff will monitor review and enactment of legal and regulatory measures and provide technical support</p>	<p>An improved version of the original text was presented to relevant stakeholders by early 2019.</p> <p>The draft decree together with the corrected National technical guidelines has been reviewed by the project staff and experts and submitted to the Minister cabinet for her review and approval prior to its submission for adoption in the National legal process. In Q3 2020 the cabinet of the Minister submitted the three legal texts for review by the private cabinet Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) prior to their injection into the National legislative process.</p> <p>On 17 November 2023, the Parliament of Congo enacted law n° 33-2023 on sound environmental management. This law provides a framework for the three application decrees on PCB that have been prepared and will be submitted soon to the Ministry Council for approbation.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	PCB owners and other stakeholders may not be willing to adopt the new business practices. For example, PCB owners may not be willing to	Low risk (L)	Low risk (L)	<p>PCB owners will be involved from the project design phase as well as invited to the project steering committee</p> <p>Practical PCB management plans are to be developed by PCB owners who will</p>	<p>Some of the petroleum companies target of this project and the utility have already undertaken inventory of their contaminated equipment. Representatives of these companies participated to meetings organized by the project during the FY2019 and continue to show commitment to the project</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	decommission PCB contaminated equipment due to a lack of replacement			need to have ESM systems of PCBs put in place to execute the plan	<p>activities despite the fact that its general Director passed away in February 2019. A complementary sampling campaign has been carried out from July to September 2019 to identify more contaminated transformers and oil and better achieve the project objectives.</p> <p>Most of the planned transformers have been decontaminated, with 55 out of 62 having been decontaminated. Only for 7 transformers, the owner (SARIS) refused to carry out decontamination since they were in a production period..</p>	
5	There may not be adequate technical capacities for key stakeholders to execute the ESM of PCBs	Low risk (L)	Low risk (L)	Private petroleum sectors have resources to train employees for the ESM and analytical skills of PCBs, and therefore legal framework on ESM of PCBs will be promoted to encourage the private sectors to invest resources and human resources in establishing the ESM of PCBs. The project will support the capacity building in the power sector.	The different training workshops organized by the project, including the one on information on PCBs and the one on the management of contaminated transformers, attracted 181 (156/25 m/w) stakeholders from public departments and private companies since the beginning of the project. During the FY 2019 an international workshop was organised in Brazzaville to validate the National Technical Directives on 9 January 2019, where 57 men and 9 women participated.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Selecting technical options may be delayed due to the delay in updating PCB inventories that could require to extend the project	Low risk (L)	Low risk (L)	Terms of Reference for selecting technical service providers will be developed in parallel to the PCB inventory update so that the bidding for PCB treatment will be completed in the second year.	During the technical workshop held on October 2016 was presented the report on start-up of the PCB inventory and preliminary Plan identifying PCB contaminated equipment. The project remains on track concerning this activity. During FY 2019, it was decided to carry out a complementary sampling campaign since the first results of the inventory do not allow to reach the project objective of the elimination of 200 tons of PCB contaminated oil and materials. This complementary campaign has been smoothly integrated to the yearly planned activities program to reduce the delay occasioned by it.	
7	Climate Change Risk: The potential project sites may have higher flood risks due to increasing flooding and a lack of drainage infrastructure	Low risk (L)	Low risk (L)	The site selection will require environmental impact assessment which will have the flood risk assessment as the requirement if relevant.	As of now, the climate change related risk did not materialize yet.	
8	Lack of contributions from the key cofinancing partners	Modest risk (M)	Modest risk (M)	The project is designed to maximize the benefits for the co-financing partners and aligned with the co-financing partners' needs so that it is more likely that they will execute the committed co-financing activities both in-kind and in cash. The co-financing partners have been involved in the project decision making process by consulting them and also inviting them as members of the Steering Committee. Commitment letters from key co-financing partners are collected to ensure their active collaboration during the project implementation phase. Once the project is approved, there should be also memorandum of understanding to be exchanged between the Ministry of Tourism and Environment and all other co-financing partners.	As of now, the project mainly executed soft activities such as awareness and technical workshops, to which private companies participated. The equipment for the execution of inventory, analysis (before decontamination) arrived in Congo in February 2017 and was used to carry out the inventory in August 2017 with the support of the E2C, previously SNE (in particular for the laboratory analysis). A similar campaign was carried out during July-September 2019 to complement the initial inventory. The activities related to the decontamination of contaminated material and the elimination of PCB yet to be fully executed would require the materialization of additional co- financing commitments. So far the National cash co-financing was not made available. This	

					include the provision of a proper storage place for PCB transformer and contaminated oil and equipment and also the transport of equipment to the temporary storing sites and then overseas for final elimination and for the replacement of transformers when needed. .	
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2. If the project received a **sub-optimal risk rating (H, S)** in the previous reporting period, please state the **actions taken** since then to mitigate the relevant risks and improve the related risk rating. Please also elaborate on reasons that may have impeded any of the sub-optimal risk ratings from improving in the current reporting cycle; please indicate actions planned for the next reporting cycle to remediate this.

NA

3. Please clarify if the project is facing delays and is expected to request an **extension**.

No additional extension is foreseen

4. Please provide the **main findings and recommendations of completed MTR**, and elaborate on any actions taken towards the recommendations included in the report.

The overall evaluation of the project in the MTR is rated as moderately satisfactory. The MTR provided the following evaluation conclusions. The project design is satisfactory. Even though the policy and legal framework for managing PCBs is very limited, the project aligns fairly well with that framework. Performance and results of project progress are moderately satisfactory. Indeed, the project remains relevant and its implementation has enabled seven (07) targets to be reached out of the thirteen (13) planned for the period and twenty-five (25) women out of a total of one hundred and forty-five (145) participants have been trained/sensitized. Unfortunately, it has been delayed in its implementation and has already been extended three times. The implementation and management of the project are moderately satisfactory given the delay and the small amount of co-financing. Finally the performance of the partners is satisfactory.

The MTR also provided the following recommendations.

To UNIDO:

- Update the project's logical framework by defining mid-term and end-of-project targets
- Continue and extend the project until completion despite its delay.
- Recruit a junior technical assistant for the national project coordinator.
- Reduce the time required to review technical documents to increase the efficiency of the project.

All these above listed recommendations have been implemented except for the recruitment of a junior technical assistant due to budget restrictions. Nevertheless, the National coordinator has been regularly provided with recommendations from UNIDO HQ to support his work and improve its efficiency, which has been successful.

To the Ministry of tourism and environment (project NEA):

- Continue to follow-up project execution and facilitate the money allocation process to the project management unit after UNIDO bank transfer. This recommendation has been implemented.
- Lobby the Ministry in charge of hydrocarbons to obtain its effective involvement and support in the mobilization of oil companies in the management of equipment and oil contaminated by PCBs. This support should at first allow the inspection of the equipment of these companies likely to be contaminated by PCBs. This recommendation has not been implemented.
- Mobilize and evaluate its co-financing in cash and in kind to facilitate the implementation of the project (especially the achievement of Output 2.3, which is very important for the achievement of Output 2) and its final evaluation. This recommendation will be done at the end of the project.

To E2C :

- Continue its commitment to the project and improve its involvement in the implementation of the project, a commitment that has seemed to wane in recent months. This recommendation has been taken into account.
- Work cooperatively with the company that will be hired to perform the decontamination of low to medium level PCB transformers and the removal of high level PCB contaminated equipment for final disposal overseas by:
 - o Preparing, in conjunction with the decontamination contractor, a de-energization plan for the equipment to be decontaminated this is currently on-going in cooperation with the recruited international company FUERA international B.V.
 - o Planning the de-energization and decommissioning of highly contaminated and in-service transformers that will be removed, transported, and disposed of by the company to be contracted to do so. This is currently on-going in cooperation with the recruited international company FUERA international B.V.
- Conduct an environmental impact assessment, including a flood risk assessment of the sites selected to receive the PCB-contaminated equipment. This has been initiated in 2021 through the creation of a special comity on environment, social impact and corporate responsibilities within E2C.
- Implement the oil and filter drainage recovery systems in the E2C maintenance workshops, which are located in the middle of the city.
- Mobilize and evaluate its co-financing in cash and in kind in order to facilitate the implementation of the project (especially the achievement of Output 2.3, which is very important in obtaining Result 2) and its final evaluation. This will be done at the end of the project.

To oil companies :

- Allow access and inspection of their equipment that may be contaminated by PCBs, commit to the vision of PCB ESM promoted by the project, and adopt within their company the BAT/BEP for PCB management. This recommendation has not been implemented.

A final technical cluster evaluation has been conducted by external evaluators for 8 closing UNIDO projects on PCBs in Bolivia, DR Congo, Guatemala, India, Lao PDR, Morocco, The Russian Federation and Serbia. Regarding Congo, the evaluator made the following comments.

Lessons learned in Congo

- The budget allocated for PCB destruction of 200 tons of PCB-contaminated equipment was very much underestimated at design. At the onset, the key objective of the project could never be achieved. Planning for appropriate budgets at the design level would ensure the delivery of outputs, products, and results during the implementation phase.
- Although the funds available were limited, project management nevertheless launched a first bid for the treatment/destruction of all the identified PCB-contaminated equipment. As expected, it failed as the only bid received was well above the available budget. A second bidding exercise, which was successful, was thus undertaken by limiting the bid amount to the available budget. As a result, implementation was delayed by almost one year. Had project management been aware of the current PCB destruction costs, they would have already limited the bid amount to the available budget during the first exercise and would have avoided the one-year delay.

From the other countries, the evaluators noted the following good practices that should be replicated in any future PCB projects:

Bolivia:

- The storage assessment visits before the PCB equipment collection processes were extremely productive since they identified the procedure's logistical requirements, missing information, and the equipment's physical state; this permitted the identification of the best treatment and disposal strategy.
- In the country, when an organization buys or maintains a transformer, it now requests a PCB-negative test before buying or treating it; this strengthens the importance of avoiding cross-contamination.

Guatemala:

- To hire an NGO to strengthen the project implementation and avoid political interventions. The PM can be more focused on the political level instead of operative issues.

- To share with stakeholders clearly since the beginning the project's objective and benefits contribute to their participation and satisfaction level
- Including a product with a long-term PCB inventory and disposal strategy where a financial analysis is included based on the project results strengthens the sustainability benefits by providing public and private stakeholders with a route map.

India:

- One NE each is based at the key stakeholder institutions, which all interviewed stakeholders highlighted to be very helpful for information exchange, good communication, and coordination of activities.
- Continuation of knowledge about the project and its activities was given at both BSP and CPRI, as UNIDO has recruited, as NEs, one at each institution, persons who were involved in the project since its commencement and had retired after a few years.
- Project is partnering with well-established and renowned institutions, BSP, CPRI, which are not only known in the country, but also internationally. They bring with them high commitment towards project objective and willingness to achieve it, also by committing and spending their own resources.
- Knowledge has been transferred to the NEs recruited to operate the mobile facility, 2 chemical engineers and 1 mechanical engineer, and they are operating the facility on their own; since CPRI has the overall responsibility for the mobile unit, the operations are supervised by a staff of CPRI.
- Providing information on CPRI's public website is also considered to be a good practice, as it enables easy accessibility of PCB-related as well as project-related information and documents produced within the framework of the project to the wider public.

Lao:

- One good practice was definitely the preparation and inclusion of the course content on POPs, including PCBs, at the National University of Lao.
- Another good practice, related to the above good practice, is the engagement of national experts from the National University of Lao to prepare the course content.
- A brochure was prepared for awareness-raising on effects of PCBs on children and pregnant women.

Serbia:

- In-country Institute Nikola Tesla has produced the mobile PCB-decontamination unit itself, and was a member of the consortium which won the tender for PCB-disposal in the country.
- Taking the gender aspect into consideration, a special brochure was prepared for pregnant women about the effects of PCBs on pregnant women.

For all 8 projects including the one in Congo, the evaluators recommended the following:

Documentation of co-financing: In some countries, information on co-financing that was executed or materialized was not available. In a few others, information was incomplete, as some stakeholder institutions that provided co-financing did not report on it. It is recommended that project managers ensure that national counterparts and other local partners periodically provide complete information on co-financing. If necessary, the local partners and counterparts should provide adequate guidance (e.g., development of a template for materialized co-financing).

Budget: In two countries, at the onset, the objective of the project could not be achieved at the onset either due to underestimation of PCB destruction cost or pledging in-kind contributions from beneficiaries instead of cash co-financing. When designing projects, project managers should allocate adequate budgets and pledge the proper type of co-financing contribution from partners and counterparts to ensure the successful delivery of goods and products that would contribute to meeting objectives.

Gender: Gender mainstreaming has not been or has not been adequately addressed in project design, as it was not a requirement at the time of project formulation, for example, under GEF-4. Nonetheless, some of the projects have ensured the appropriate involvement of both genders in project activities and, secondly, prepared gender-related awareness-raising material. During project formulation and implementation, PMs should provide and track those activities that consider gender mainstreaming and specifically address gender, as appropriate.

Knowledge management: Projects should design and ensure a proper knowledge management system, first for the exchange and transfer of knowledge during project implementation and second for the transfer of knowledge after project completion.

Information management: Similar to knowledge management, projects should plan and integrate a proper information management system.

M&E - Medium Term Reviews: In case of delays, especially of projects of significant scope and longer delays, PMs should consider an additional MTR or other convenient activities such as self-evaluations depending on the project performance, stakeholders' participation, reasons for delays and project stage.

IV. Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS)

1. As part of the requirements for **projects from GEF-6 onwards**, and based on the screening as per the UNIDO Environmental and Social Safeguards Policies and Procedures (ESSPP), which category is the project?

Category A project

Category B project

Category C project

(By selecting Category C, I confirm that the E&S risks of the project have not escalated to Category A or B).

Notes on new risks:

- *If new risks have been identified during implementation due to changes in, i.e. project design or context, these should also be listed in (ii) below.*
- *If these new/additional risks are related to Operational Safeguards # 2, 3, 5, 6, or 8, please consult with UNIDO GEF Coordination to discuss next steps.*
- *Please refer to the UNIDO [Environmental and Social Safeguards Policies and Procedures \(ESSPP\)](#) on how to report on E&S issues.*

Please expand the table as needed.

	E&S risk	Mitigation measures undertaken during the reporting period	Monitoring methods and procedures used in the reporting period
(i) Risks identified in ESMP at time of CEO Endorsement	NA	NA	NA
(ii) New risks identified during project implementation (if not applicable, please insert 'NA' in each box)	NA	NA	NA

V. Stakeholder Engagement

1. Using the previous reporting period as a basis, please provide information on **progress, challenges and outcomes** regarding engagement of stakeholders in the project (based on the Stakeholder Engagement Plan or equivalent document submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval).

The involvement of private petroleum companies in the project built on the private sector's resources and capacities that could be engaged in the project's PCB decontamination activities. However, petroleum companies were reluctant to provide any cash co-financing to the project. In this country, there is a significant gap in resources and capacities made available between the private petroleum sector and other industrial & public sectors. No cash co-financing contribution as planned during the PPG phase of the project was received by the project from the government of Congo and E2C despite the continuous engagement of stakeholders. Expected co-financing included the provision of appropriate storage sites (at least 1) by project beneficiaries (E2C) and the replacement of PCB highly contaminated transformers by the owners (especially E2C, the main beneficiary) with new equipment. The absence of national co-financing has impacted the execution of the activities and the achievement of the project's environmental objectives.

The project facilitated knowledge sharing between the petroleum sector and others during technical training and pollution control operations. This collaboration was strengthened, and high-level agreements were made between the different ministries to facilitate visits of the National project units of the petroleum companies and EEC (former SNE). The EEC has already shown engagement, especially during the PCB inventory. The Government only provided in-kind contributions to the project.

In 2018, the project unit of the NEA previously developed a guideline on the BAT/BEP ("carnet d'entretien") for the sound management of transformers, including those contaminated with PCBs. This document was the baseline to further develop the National technical guidelines, which are currently under final approval as a legal official document by the cabinet of the Minister of Tourism and Environment. This should be used to encourage the major partners to adopt their own technical guidelines. Furthermore, some national technical guidelines have also been developed and validated during a workshop that took place in Q1 2019 where all stakeholders and partners were invited. The workshop was organized by the NEA, hosted by the primary partner (E2C), and opened by the Minister of Tourism and Environment (MTE).

The National technical guidelines have been transformed into a draft legal document together with another decree on the creation of a National PCB committee and a National law on the sound management of PCB. These three legal documents were prepared by the PMU and submitted to the cabinet of the MTE during Q3 2020. In Q3 2020 the cabinet of the Minister submitted the three legal texts for review by the private cabinet Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) before their injection into the National legal acceptance process.

A first international call for tender was launched during Q2 –Q3 2020 for the decontamination of low-contaminated equipment, transport, storage, and expedition for the final elimination of highly PCB-contaminated equipment and oil. However, only one company answered this first call and made an offer which was three times more than the total budget currently available for these activities. Therefore, a second call was launched during Q1 2021 with more details and a clearly announced limited budget of USD 450,000. Considering the available GEF budget allocated for carrying these activities, the company would only be able to carry out a part of the planned activities for decontamination and final elimination. Despite a strong advertisement, only one company answered the call. This may be due to a low budget, which is not attractive for international companies, which are used to operate for larger projects.

Following this bidding process, the Company FUERA International BV was selected and long negotiations were carried out to fit within the project budget and change the initial ToR associated to the open call for bids. This revised version of the subcontract focuses on the decontamination of PCB low-contaminated equipment and the training of the project's beneficiaries. This appears to be the most cost-effective solution. FUERA International BV signed a contract with UNIDO during Q1 2022. Some difficulties were encountered by FUERA international B.V. and its partners GP2E and Hydrotech with the Congolese customs authorities to import the decontamination material to Congo, which postponed the beginning of the decontamination operations.

Despite further delays, which occurred during the reporting period due to sites not being ready as planned, the decontamination operations have been carried out and completed. However, seven units that have not been treated as they were not made available by the owners because of their operational priorities.

The contaminated oil and waste have not yet been exported. The process of exporting started with the request for an identification number to be delivered by the Ministry after an inspection mission to validate the current quantities for exportation and sound elimination overseas according to the Stockholm and Bale conventions requirements on POPs and hazardous waste transportation respectively.

2. Please provide any feedback submitted by national counterparts, GEF OFF, co-financiers, and other project partners/stakeholders (e.g., private sector, CSOs, NGOs, etc.).

Please summarize relevant feedback received on the project.

No specific feedback is to be provided for FY24.

3. Please provide any **relevant stakeholder consultation** documents.

2023-2024:

- 5325_Report_VisitofPreparation17June2023
- 5325_Mission_report_Bouensa_June2023_Operation_Identification
- 5325_Annex_Mission_report_Bouensa_June2024_Operation_Identification
- 5325_Decontamination_Plan_PointeNoireJuly2023
- 5325_Intro_Letter_by_Min_of_Decree
- 5325_MinistryMeeting_agenda_8_Decemb2023
- 5325_Mission_report_Pointe_Noire_Oct2023_Operation_Launch
- 5325_revised_Agendaretrofilling_operations

VI. Gender Mainstreaming

1. Using the previous reporting period as a basis, please report on the **progress achieved on implementing gender-responsive measures and using gender-sensitive indicators**, as documented at CEO Endorsement/Approval (in the project results framework, gender action plan or equivalent),.

The gender dimension has been incorporated into the project design and log-frame with proper indicators selected following the UNIDO's policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. There are currently no female workers engaged at the transformer maintenance workshops in E2C both in Brazzaville and Pointe Noire. There are some female officers both in other divisions of E2C as well as the Direction of Environment of the MTE. By measuring the gender-segregated indicators, the project encourages key stakeholders to become aware of the gender balance, develop gender-sensitive technical guidelines and awareness-raising activities, and make efforts to give priorities and project-related tasks to their female officers and workers. Having female workers and technicians in the power sector may take much effort due to a lack of qualified candidates. However, it is expected that the gender-sensitive technical guideline will encourage more balanced decision processes and practices by leading the guideline users to improve their occupational standards to safeguard more vulnerable workers' health conditions. The project encourages women to participate in meetings and workshops and reports on it. Since the beginning of the project, 30 females and 189 males participated in the activities.

No specific feedback is to be provided for FY24

VII. Knowledge Management and Communication

1. Using the previous reporting period as a basis, please elaborate on any **knowledge management and communication activities / products**, as documented at CEO Endorsement / Approval.

Awareness among policymakers, employees of the key stakeholders, potential buyers and users of possibly contaminated oil, academic communities, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), as well as general public with strong interests has been properly raised to support the establishment and consequent enforcement of the legal framework during the inception workshop (in 2016) and the technical workshops held in 2016 and 2017. This gave opportunities to the major stakeholders to provide their feedback. In addition, awareness-raising events also help the country absorb the knowledge through different social actors, which would provide a check and balance function for enforcing the established legal framework. The gender balance of the participants has been monitored at all meetings. Appropriate organizations representing vulnerable actors such as women and current artisanal users of used transformer oil have been invited as well. Gender-sensitive awareness-raising and training materials have been prepared and distributed during these events.

During Q4 2023-Q2 2024, three practical on-site trainings were delivered to the beneficiaries by the company contracted for the decontamination and expedition of contaminated oil and equipment for final elimination.

2. Please list any relevant knowledge management and communication mechanisms / tools that the project has generated.

5325_final_inventory

- 5325_Technical_guidelines_PCB_FINAL_revPwC
- 5325_video_training_POPs_French
- 5325_video_training_POPs_local_language
- 5325_leaftlet_project_PCB
- 5325_Brochure_CongoPCB_2018
- 5325_news_PCB_decontamination_national_management_site

FY24

- 5325_Law33_2023_17Nov_Sound_Env_Mgmt_Congo
- 5325_Draft_Decree_Technical_guidelinesPCB
- 5325_Draft_Decree_Sound_Mngt_PCB

VIII. Implementation progress

1. Using the previous reporting period as a basis, please provide information on **progress, challenges and outcomes achieved/observed** with regards to project implementation.

The on-site retrofilling operations of PCB containing transformers have been completed. 55 transformers out of the 62 preselected ones have been retrofilled. The seven units that have not been treated, were not made available by the owners because of their operational priorities.

A sound storage site is in place for the project at the Hydrotech site in Pointe-Noire.

The process of exporting PCB-contaminated oils started with the request for an identification number to be delivered by the Ministry after an inspection mission to validate the current quantities for exportation and sound elimination overseas according to the Stockholm and Bale conventions requirements on POPs and hazardous waste transportation respectively.

2. Please briefly elaborate on any **minor amendments**⁶ to the approved project that may have been introduced during the implementation period or indicate as not applicable (NA).

Please tick each category for which a change has occurred and provide a description of the change in the related textbox. You may attach supporting documentation, as appropriate.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Results Framework	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Components and Cost	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Institutional and Implementation Arrangements	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial Management	minor amendments to the approved budget, below 10% threshold of the project overall amount was moved between main project outcomes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Implementation Schedule	In total 7 extensions were done, including 6 extensions corresponding to 5 years of extension and an additional one in 2023. The project suffered delays due to COVID-19 and needed several years to find a subcontractor for PCB elimination. The budget of the Project was insufficient to attract bidders, and the call for bids had to be relaunched several times. During the final technical evaluation of the project that was carried out during Q3-Q4 2022 it was thus recommended an additional extension of the project until December 2023 to ensure the smooth finalization of the project operations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Executing Entity	The entity is the same, but its name has changed since the beginning of the project: It is actually named: "Department of Environment, Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development and of the Congo Basin" (previously named « Ministry of Tourism and Environment »)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Executing Entity Category	

⁶ As described in Annex 9 of the *GEF Project and Program Cycle Policy Guidelines*, **minor amendments** are changes to the project design or implementation that do not have significant impact on the project objectives or scope, or an increase of the GEF project financing up to 5%.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Minor Project Objective Change	The project will focus on the decontamination of PCB low contaminated equipment and the training of the beneficiaries of the project.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Safeguards	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Risk Analysis	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Increase of GEF Project Financing Up to 5%	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Co-Financing	No co-financing from national electricity production companies
<input type="checkbox"/>	Location of Project Activities	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Others	

3. Please provide progress related to the financial implementation of the project.

During the reporting period, about USD 110,000 were disbursed to Fuera International B.V for the decontamination operations. About USD 12,000 have been used for Monitoring the operations and reporting. About USD 4,600 have been obligated for the purpose of updating the TE report.

IX. Work Plan and Budget

1. Please provide **an updated project work plan and budget** for the remaining duration of the project, as per last approved project extension. Please expand/modify the table as needed.

NA. Last project extension was until 31.12.2023

X. Synergies

1. **Synergies** achieved:

Describe potential synergies arising out of UNIDO internal cooperation and/or cooperation with (external) bilateral and multilateral projects/programmes, if applicable.

NA

3. Stories to be shared (Optional)

Please provide a brief summary of any especially interesting and impactful project results that are worth sharing with a larger audience, and/or investing communications time in. Please include links to any stories/videos available online.

XI. GEO LOCATION INFORMATION

The Location Name, Latitude and Longitude are required fields insofar as an Agency chooses to enter a project location under the set format. The Geo Name ID is required in instances where the location is not exact, such as in the case of a city, as opposed to the exact site of a physical infrastructure. The Location & Activity Description fields are optional. Project longitude and latitude must follow the Decimal Degrees WGS84 format and Agencies are encouraged to use at least four decimal points for greater accuracy. Users may add as many locations as appropriate. Web mapping applications such as [OpenStreetMap](#) or [GeoNames](#) use this format. Consider using a conversion tool as needed, such as: <https://coordinates-converter.com> Please see the Geocoding User Guide by clicking [here](#)

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	Geo Name ID	Location and Activity Description
HYDROTECH s.a.	-4.7094972	11.94525555555557	NA	Activity Description: habilitated storage site of hazardous waste, including the PCB-contaminated waste storage place of the project, decontamination of PCB-low contaminated transformers during the decontamination operations of the project. Location: Rond-point Mpita vers le Centre Culturel JB Tati Loutard Pointe Noire, Republic of Congo https://maps.app.goo.gl/DkKhXv2PywQx9d2p6
site de Brazzaville, centrale hydroélectrique de djoué:	- 4.31	15.206944444444444	NA	Activity Description: temporary PCB-contaminated waste storage place of the project before their expedition to the habilitated storage place of HYDROTECH s.a. in Pointe Noire, decontamination of PCB-low contaminated transformers during the decontamination operations of the project. Location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/7Y1BNWmiuXwEfgcWA
site de la Bouenza; station interconnectée poste électrique de Loudima	-4.1144444	13.074444444444444	NA	Activity Description: temporary PCB-contaminated waste storage place of the project before their expedition to the habilitated storage place of HYDROTECH s.a. in Pointe Noire, decontamination of PCB-low contaminated transformers during the decontamination operations of the project. Location: https://maps.app.goo.gl/CJdiy6ptdnJQ5GMn8

Please provide any further geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions is taking place as appropriate.

The decontamination operations have been conducted at different places.

FUERA International B.V. used, in cooperation with its local partner Hydrotech and the project beneficiary E2C, the following sites belonging to E2C after some preparatory layout and construction work.

The location of the E2C sites are as follows:

-“ centrale hydroélectrique de djoué” site located in Brazzaville to treat transformers located in Brazzaville

- “Loudima” site to treat transformers located in “Bouenza” region and in the “Niari” region;

And also:

- Hydrotech site to treat transformers located in Pointe-Noire

After their decontamination, each transformer has been put back in use at its original operating location, while the PCB-contaminated oil will be transported, following international best practices and recommendations, to the Hydrotech storage place located in Pointe Noire, as mentioned above.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

1. **Timing & duration:** Each report covers a twelve-month period, i.e. 1 July 2023 – 30 June 2024.
2. **Responsibility:** The responsibility for preparing the report lies with the project manager in consultation with the Division Chief and Director.
3. **Evaluation:** For the report to be used effectively as a tool for annual self-evaluation, project counterparts need to be fully involved. The (main) counterpart can provide any additional information considered essential, including a simple rating of project progress.
4. **Results-based management:** The annual project/programme progress reports are required by the RBM programme component focal points to obtain information on outcomes observed.

Global Environmental Objectives (GEOs) / Development Objectives (DOs) ratings	
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Project is expected to achieve or exceed <u>all</u> its major global environmental objectives, and yield substantial global environmental benefits, without major shortcomings. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
Satisfactory (S)	Project is expected to <u>achieve most</u> of its <u>major</u> global environmental objectives, and yields satisfactory global environmental benefits, with only minor shortcomings.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Project is expected to <u>achieve most</u> of its major <u>relevant</u> objectives but with either significant shortcomings or modes overall relevance. Project is expected not to achieve some of its major global environmental objectives or yield some of the expected global environmental benefits.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Project is expected to achieve <u>some</u> of its major global environmental objectives with major shortcomings or is expected to <u>achieve only some</u> of its major global environmental objectives.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Project is expected <u>not</u> to achieve <u>most</u> of its major global environmental objectives or to yield any satisfactory global environmental benefits.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The project has failed to achieve, and is not expected to achieve, <u>any</u> of its major global environmental objectives with no worthwhile benefits.

Implementation Progress (IP)	
Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of <u>all</u> components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised implementation plan for the project. The project can be presented as “good practice”.

Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of <u>most</u> components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan except for only few that are subject to remedial action.
Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of <u>some</u> components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan with some components requiring remedial action.
Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of <u>some</u> components is <u>not</u> in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan with most components requiring remedial action.
Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of <u>most</u> components in <u>not</u> in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan.
Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of <u>none</u> of the components is in substantial compliance with the original/formally revised plan.

Risk ratings	
Risk ratings will assess the overall risk of factors internal or external to the project which may affect implementation or prospects for achieving project objectives. Risk of projects should be rated on the following scale:	
High Risk (H)	There is a probability of greater than 75% that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face high risks.
Substantial Risk (S)	There is a probability of between 51% and 75% that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face substantial risks.
Moderate Risk (M)	There is a probability of between 26% and 50% that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face only moderate risk.
Low Risk (L)	There is a probability of up to 25% that assumptions may fail to hold or materialize, and/or the project may face only low risks.