

New Report Supports EU's Shift to Natural Refrigerants in Domestic Heat Pumps

ATMOsphere's Report: 'Accelerating the EU's Shift Towards Natural Refrigerant Domestic Heat Pumps' was published on 27 June and is available for free download.

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, June 27, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- ATMOsphere's new report, 'Accelerating the EU's Shift Towards Natural Refrigerant Domestic Heat Pumps' supports the stance that the timelines related to the decarbonisation of the heating sector is a good opportunity to move directly to natural refrigerant heat pumps.



Over the past six months, ATMOsphere has been conducting an in-depth investigation into the domestic heat pump sector (excluding air-to-air heat pumps) in the European Union (EU). This research was conceptualised by the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) and the Environmental Coalition on Standards (ECOS). It was funded by the European Climate Foundation (ECF).

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Thomas Trevisan

The aim of this qualitative research study was to highlight the potential impact of the existing HFC refrigerant phase down on the domestic heat pump sector in the EU, while also considering how an even stricter phase down that is in line with EU climate neutrality objectives can accelerate the shift from fossil-fuel-based heating systems to clean heat pumps.

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Not all heat pumps are equal

Heat pumps are expected to contribute significantly to the decarbonization of heating supplies in European households. However, not all heat pumps are the same. Despite suitable natural-refrigerant-based alternative technologies being readily available on the European market, domestic heat pump systems often rely on highly polluting synthetic substances like fluorinated greenhouse gases (f-gases) to transfer heat.

As EU policy tightens around the use of f-gases, the path to changing to natural refrigerant alternatives in heat pumps becomes even more obvious for ensuring future-proof, sustainable installations. On April 5, 2022, the European Commission proposed a new amended version of the EU F-gas Regulation targeting climate polluting f-gases. The proposal strengthens the HFC phase-down schedule (an approximately 98% reduction on the allowed quantity by 2048 based on the level in 2015) and introduces prohibitions targeting new heat pumps and air conditioners.

The European Commission's increased ambition on this regulation is supported by the findings of this research. With specific reference to heat pumps, systems running with naturally occurring working fluids (such as hydrocarbons, carbon dioxide and/ or ammonia) that do not deplete the ozone layer and have negligible global warming potential, are a market reality today and can substitute those relying on f-gases. These systems are efficient, and more climate aligned.

In the report, sample group interviews with heat pump manufacturers in Europe point to a growing presence of original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) across Europe with systems running with natural refrigerants in their portfolio. Interviewed companies operating with natural refrigerant heat pumps are ready to scale up their production and meet an increasing demand triggered by decarbonisation policies.

"The insights shared in this report support the stance that the timelines related to the decarbonisation of the heating sector should not be separated from the phase down of fluorinated substances used as refrigerants," said lead author of the report, Thomas Trevisan, ATMOSphere Policy Officer.

Launched with a webinar

ATMOSphere shared findings from the report during a livestreamed webinar on Monday, 27 June. The livestream recording will be available on the [project website](#) from Tuesday, 28 June.

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Thomas Trevisan
ATMOSphere
thomas.trevisan@shecco.com

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