Ladies and Gentlemen,
Over the next few minutes, I will try to outline how countries can maximise opportunities for the safe use of lower GWP alternatives through the IEC.

The IEC is a global not-for-profit quasi-governmental organization that was founded in 1906. It is neutral and independent and brings together 170 countries that cover over 99% of the world population.

It fully satisfies the requirements of the World Trade Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement.

Nearly all countries in the world accept products built according to IEC International Standards.
Around 20 000 experts work on the IEC global platform and represent the electrotechnical needs of their national stakeholders at the global level.

The IEC has currently around 10 000 voluntary and consensus based International Standards in its library. These are high-level technical documents that are used by topical experts during design, manufacturing, installation, maintenance, repair and decommissioning.

Importantly, in the IEC consensus-based doesn’t imply 100% agreement. For a Standard to be accepted, fundamental issues must have been overcome and a 2/3 majority approval by all experts achieved.

IEC International Standards also form the basis for testing and certification of devices, systems and the competence of people.

The IEC is unique in that it also runs four Conformity Assessment Systems whose members test and certify that devices perform as expected.
The IEC is neutral, independent, and fact driven. It has clearly established operational principles and only responds to arguments that are motivated by engineering or science.

Hereafter the ways in which stakeholders, including governments and regulators can successfully influence IEC work.

Countries can send experts through the National Committee to participate in the IEC, where they will represent the national viewpoint at the global level in the IEC.

Developing countries can participate in the Affiliate Country Programme, nominate experts and select technical committees where they comment on working documents.

It is true that physical presence can be costly therefore the IEC also offers a number of other opportunities to participate in its work:

Those include remote meeting participation;

An online platform that allows experts to comment on the committee draft for voting during 2 months;

A liaison, whereby organizations can send experts who can participate in meetings and view and comment on documents.
The IEC has 83 members, one per country. We call them National Committees. They promise to follow IEC rules and to represent all national electrotechnical interests at the global level in the IEC.

Every National Committee is free to select the technical activities it wants to participate in. Participation means: commenting and voting, and sending experts.

They appoint experts and help coordinate the national position among all relevant interests. They also submit proposals for new Standards.

Via the National Committee, the country is able to adopt IEC International Standards as national standards.
For developing countries, the IEC offers the Affiliate Country Programme, which allows 87 developing countries to participate in the IEC without the financial and other burdens that come with membership.

The IEC works in highly technical fields, and developing countries do not always have the expertise to actively contribute to IEC technical work. However, when they do, they are able to appoint up to 5 experts and select up to 10 technical committees where they can comment on all working documents. This is something the IEC highly encourages, including through mentoring and training, as it brings a different point of view to the table. However, to date only relatively few developing countries take advantage of this offer.

The IEC public commenting platform allows experts outside of the IEC to comment during a two month period on any of the Draft IEC Standards which have reached the enquiry stage. This gives anyone with pertinent expertise the chance to shape the International Standards used in their field.
An organization such as UNEP can participate in IEC work through a formal liaison. Once accepted, they can send experts to participate in working groups and in committee meetings, have access to the working documents and can comment. Organizations also have the possibility to submit a formal request for work to the IEC. The IEC then forwards this to all participating National Committees for their consideration.

During discussions with UNEP we noticed that a number of experts already participate in both organizations.

In the area of refrigerants, the IEC and ISO technical committees work closely together and while there are some overlaps in many ways our work is complimentary. Our processes are very similar in many ways.
In sum, the best way to ensure that IEC International Standards reflect the needs of all interested parties is to mobilize national industry and experts to comment and participate actively through National Committees or in developing countries through IEC Affiliates. Standards get better when more people share their technical expertise.

One last word: contrary to common believe, IEC Standards aim to provide basic guidance that is generally technology neutral and encourages focused innovation. This allows companies to come up with new solutions to fulfil safety, performance and other requirements.

Thank you for your attention.