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Beside existing gases or gas mixtures with a GWP ≤ 10 or even GWP ≤ 1 , are there emerging any further new alternatives?

With regards to current environmental directives, related to fluorine (F-) insulation gases, the following gives an indication on the current global orientation.

Sustainable development goals, which are defined by the UN (Fig 1), are focussing on topics like good health, affordable & clean energy, climate actions and CO₂ net zero.

Whereas national and international legislations and regulations do emphasize on implementation of defined targets, e.g. in case of F-gases with

- national penalties for CO₂ and/or SF₆; moving towards SF₆ bans (Fig 2)
- CARB California: stepwise SF₆ phase-out for new equipment installations
- EU regulation proposal: placing on market prohibition for F-gases [2]
- Starting worldwide restrictions activities on PFAS*
 (*Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) = forever chemicals, incl. PFAS F-gases as C4-FN and C5-FK*)

Grid operators and equipment manufacturers are more and more concentrating on the reduction of SF₆ emissions and how to phase out SF₆ as well as on the launch of e.g. future-proof products using F-gas-free clean air (synthetic air) technology (Fig 3).



Fig. 1: Sustainability development goals of UN [1]

EUROPEAN COMMISSION	
Strasbourg, 5.4.2022 COM(2022) 150 final	
Prohibition F-gases GWP ≥ 10	
≤ 24 kV	1 January 2026
≤ 52 kV	1 January 2030
≤ 145 kV, 50 kA	1 January 2028
> 145 kV, 50 kA	1 January 2031

Fig 2: EU F-gas regulation prohibition timeline [2]



Fig 3: Clean Air and vacuum technology

Supporting these objectives, the following exemplary responses to ban F-gases with GWP ≥ 10 in the EU, are formulated in the following expectations towards SF₆ free alternatives.

Nongovernmental Organizations (NGO) call for F-gas-free grids, based on natural origin gases (Fig 4), by

- mandate to fast phase-out of SF₆ with ambitious transition times
- extend emission containment and reporting obligations
- address SF₆ leakages, using labelling, reporting and monitoring
- incentivize the demand for SF₆-free technologies
- demand a fast transition towards F-gas-free alternatives only

Transmission System Operators (TSO) call for transition to F-gas free technologies (Fig 5) by

- defining the long-term goal for some TSOs to exclusively use of natural insulation gases as alternatives to SF₆.
- aiming to pilot SF₆-free alternative technologies to minimize greenhouse gas emissions quick, comprehensive and sustainable.

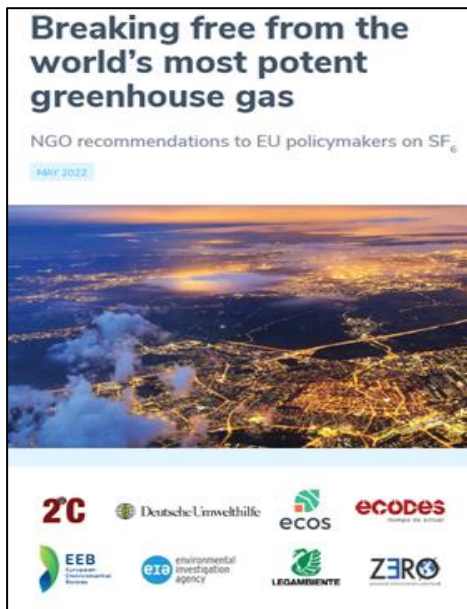


Fig 4: NGO recommendations on greenhouse gases [3]



Fig 5: Letter by TSO: Transition to SF₆-free technologies in high and extra-high voltage levels [4]

With respect to the mentioned targets and demands, the focus in terms of decarbonization should be to achieve an overall CO₂ emission of zero as the final solution. Thus, the alternatives to SF₆ insulating gas types should be based on natural-origin gases with a GWP= 0, preventing a regrettable substitution in the long term.

The result of a Life Cycle Assessment (Fig. 5) for exemplary 145kV gas insulated switchgear types clearly visualize that the requested target of zero emission in 2050 can only be achieved by a Clean Air type and not with SF₆ or non-natural-origin alternatives.

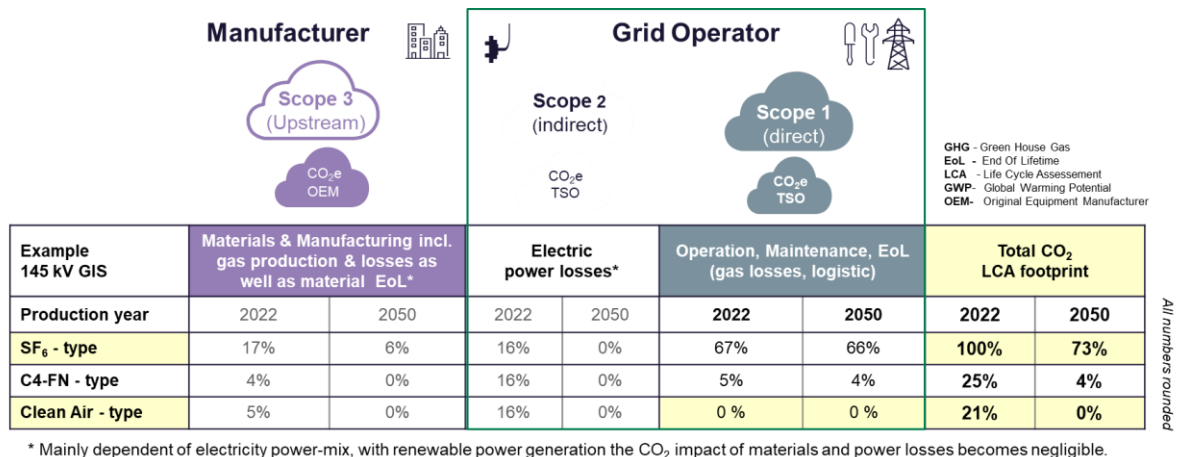


Fig. 5 : LCA for a 145kV GIS, calculated for three different insulation gases types

- [1] United Nations, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS 8, May 2020 [SDG Guidelines AUG 2019 Final.pdf \(un.org\)](#)
- [2] EU COM, Proposal for a Regulation of the european parliament and of the council on fluorinated greenhouse gases, amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 517/2014, April 2022
- [3] EU NGOs, Breaking free from the world's most potent greenhouse gas NGO recommendations to EU policymakers on SF₆, May 2022 ([ECOS-SF6-policy-recommendations-final.pdf \(ecostandard.org\)](#))
- [4] 50Hertz/Amprion/Tennet/Transnet BW, Umstieg auf SF₆-freie Technologien in der Hoch- und Höchstspannung, June 2022 ([4 UeNB - Strategie - AlternativeGase.pdf \(netztransparenz.de\)](#))