Rwanda’s Minister of Environment, Dr Bernadette Arakwiye, has been elected to lead the 38th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol (MOP38), taking place in Kigali from November 2 to 6.

Her election places her at the centre of discussions involving countries working to protect the ozone layer and implement the international agreement. The Ministry of Environment described the development as a step forward for Rwanda’s role in global environmental affairs.

MOP38 brings together representatives of governments and international organisations to review progress in implementing the Montreal Protocol, discuss outstanding challenges and consider further measures to strengthen its implementation.

The meeting also marks 10 years since the adoption of the Kigali Amendment in October 2016. The amendment requires countries to gradually reduce the production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), gases widely used in refrigeration and air conditioning that contribute to global warming.

Arakwiye brings experience in environmental research and natural resource management to the position. Before becoming Minister of Environment in July 2025, she served as Senior Manager for Africa Restoration Programmes at the World Resources Institute (WRI).

She previously worked with Conservation International and the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund and has also been involved in research and advisory work on environmental conservation and land restoration.

Arakwiye holds a PhD in Geography from Clark University in the United States, a master’s degree in Environmental Studies from Antioch University and a bachelor’s degree in Biology from the former National University of Rwanda.

The Montreal Protocol was adopted in 1987 to phase out substances responsible for depleting the ozone layer. The Kigali Amendment extended the agreement’s climate benefits by targeting HFCs, which contribute to global warming.