

CCAC's High Level Assembly increases ambition to address the 1.5°C challenge

The 10th High Level Assembly recognized the importance of integrating climate and air quality actions and passes 'CCAC Action Programme to Address the 1.5°C Challenge'

Katowice, December 13, 2018: Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) Ministers and high-level representatives agreed to push forward an ambitious Action Programme at the Coalition's 10th High Level Assembly at the UN Climate meeting (COP24) in Katowice, Poland.

The Action Programme calls for enhanced ambition to rapidly reduce short-lived climate pollutants and to ensure that mitigation efforts are integrated in order to address air pollution and climate change at the same time.

These efforts can avoid 0.6°C of temperature increase between now and 2050, prevent millions of premature deaths from air pollution, prevent 50 million tonnes of crop losses annually, and help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Action Programme recognizes that action taken in the next decade is crucial if the world is to achieve the Paris Agreement's 1.5 degree Celsius (1.5°C) temperature goal. It calls on all Coalition partners to "define and walk the talk of achieving a rapid reduction of the rate of warming in the near-term, while at the same time striving to reach our long-term temperature goal to stabilize the climate system".

CCAC Working Group Co-Chair, Alice Kaudia, chaired the meeting and called on countries to share views on how to increase climate ambition while considering the co-benefits for clean air. She also called on partners to endorse the [CCAC Talanoa Statement and Joint Submission](#).

On behalf of Poland's State Secretary and COP 24 President, Kinga Majewska, Deputy Director, Department of Air Protection and Climate, Ministry of the Environment, Poland, welcomed Coalition partners to Katowice and encouraged them to act saying, "We are aware that political agreements are important but after that we have to go home and take action to bring those agreements to life".

Ms. Majewska said integrating efforts to reduce air pollution and climate change were one and the same, and that Poland considers the actions of the Coalition to reduce short-lived climate pollutants is complimentary to actions to reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂).

David Paul, Minister of Environment, Marshall Islands, called for increased ambition and quick and effective action from all countries, stressing that surpassing the 1.5°C limit will add irreversible consequences and risk tipping points, making it difficult to stabilise the climate.

"We have to act, and we have act quickly with impact. We now understand that the pathway to keep us to 1.5°C means deep reductions in short-lived climate pollutants," Minister Paul said. "We need to

be bold and we need to be brave. If we do so we will all reap the benefits. Those that don't will be left behind and miss out on the benefits that come with climate action.”

Ministers and high-level representatives of international and non-governmental organizations referenced the findings of the recent [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5°C](#) (IPCC 1.5°C report), and [UN Environment's 2018 Emissions Gap Report](#) to call for increased action on short-lived climate pollutants to rapidly reduce the rate of warming in the near term, and to complement global CO₂ reduction efforts.

Ola Elvestuen, Norway's Minister for Climate and Environment said: “The IPCC 1.5°C report shows the gravity of the situation we are in. We must act fast and in a manner that makes it possible to reach the 1.5°C goal. The difference between a 1.5°C world and a 2°C world, is a world that we don't recognise in the future.”

To meet the challenging task of achieving the world's climate and development goals Minister Elvestuen said the world needs to pull all possible levers to slow warming.

“To succeed in the long-term, we need to choose a path that will slow the rate of global warming in the near term,” he said. “By reducing both short-lived climate pollutants – such as methane, black carbon and HFCs – and long-lived gases like CO₂, we increase our chance of success.”

Satya Triparthi, UN Environment Assistant Secretary-General, said the High Level Assembly is a unique space where countries could have maximum impact. He said the climate change challenge is growing exponentially and called on “us to stop thinking in silos and start thinking in a very integrated manner” to reduce threats to climate and air quality.

“There are solutions to deal with these issues,” Mr Triparthi said. “We need to find the resolve to take the necessary steps to make a difference to the lives of millions of people.”

The need for action and solutions were highlighted in a video shown at the meeting.

Rachel Kyte, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All, said COP 24 is a critical step in collective efforts to raise ambition, and that the Climate and Clean Air Coalition is known for its ambition. She called on Coalition partners to consider providing energy efficient cooling solutions, noting that as the world gets warmer clean and energy efficient cooling become a necessity, not a luxury. She called on the Coalition to finance and deploy low-carbon solutions, invest in zero-carbon technology solutions, and think systematically about how to cost effectively and sustainably meet people's needs.

Emmanuel de Guzman, Secretary of Climate Change, Climate Change Commission, the Philippines, highlighted the winners of the 2018 Climate and Clean Air Awards and noted that they represent the range of solutions, projects and individual efforts taking place to reduce air and climate pollutants.

“The work of Climate and Clean Air Award winners is helping transform attitudes, spark innovation, provide business opportunities, and improve lives and livelihoods,” he said. “Award winners exemplify what climate action looks like, they are fast-action heroes.”

Enhancing Ambition

Ministers outlined ideas for enhanced ambition that the Coalition should take forward.

James Shaw, Minister of Climate Change, New Zealand, said the Coalition provided one of the few forums to discuss methane emissions from agriculture and has been important in encouraging countries to include agriculture emissions in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Minister Shaw called on more Coalition countries to join the [Agriculture initiative](#) and for the Coalition to set up an earmarked fund for Agriculture.

“There exists a fear that action on climate change will impact food and food security,” Minister Shaw said. “We no longer have that fear. We know we can feed the world and reduce emissions at the same time.”

Carolina Schmidt, Minister of Environment, Chile, noted that additional efforts are required to address climate change, including by reducing SLCPs. She emphasized the importance of addressing SLCPs in the transport, energy and residential sectors, and said that Chile is working on a proposal to mitigate black carbon.

Minister Schmidt also said the Coalition’s [BreatheLife campaign](#), led by the World Health Organization and UN Environment, presents an important opportunity to communicate the dangers of air pollution and the benefits of action. 10 million people in Chile suffer from health impacts related to air pollution and the campaign has helped Chile communicate to people about the dangers of heating their houses with wood and biomass.

Vincent Biruta, Minister of Natural Resources, Land, Forests, Environment and Mining, Rwanda, underlined that a key success of Coalition members was its work to deliver and ratify the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol. He also said the Coalition was one of the first to recognise the clean air benefits from increased energy efficiency in cooling.

Minister Biruta said the Coalition has another opportunity to deliver solutions at scale and called on the Coalition to consider changing its current [HFC initiative](#) to an Energy Efficient Cooling initiative.

“Energy efficiency in cooling lacks the serious attention that it deserves. We can save \$2.9 trillion in operating costs and double our climate benefits by phasing down HFCs and increasing energy efficiency.” Minister Biruta said. “We are a coalition that can act fast and Rwanda stands ready to support the CCAC’s efforts in this regard.”

Yasuo Takahashi, Vice Minister for Global Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Environment, Japan, said Japan would continue to support the Coalition’s efforts to reduce emissions from the [waste sector](#) and efforts to [strengthen national action planning on short-lived climate pollutants \(SNAP\)](#). Mr. Takahashi noted the importance of science data to mainstream SLCPs in national action plans and said Japan’s recently launched Greenhouse Gases Observing Satellite (GOSAT II) has enhanced accuracy to detect CO₂ and methane emissions and will help increase understanding of global methane distribution.

There were also pledges to the Coalition’s trust fund to help deliver this important work. Monaco’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gilles Tonelli, signed a donor agreement with the CCAC for 500,000 Euro for 2018-2019. Minister Tonelli said Monaco has been involved for a long time on improving air quality and worked with the CCAC this year to install the first air quality monitor on a stadium in Monaco.

Finland supported the CCAC Action Programme and announced a Euro 200,000 contribution to the CCAC Trust Fund. Finland also has a multi-million-dollar package to address black carbon in the Arctic

and is developing tools for integrated emissions assessments and wants to work with other countries to develop these tools further.

The Belgium region of Wallonia pledged Euro 100,000 to the Coalition. Jean-Luc Crucke, Minister of Budget, Finance, Energy, Climate and Airports of the Walloon Region, said the work of the CCAC is critical to make the difference between a 1.5°C and 2°C world. Minister Crucke also called on the Coalition to work on initiatives to increase active transport, like cycling and walking, as an alternative to driving.

The Coalition also welcomed eight new members as partners. Country partners include Argentina, Panama, and Zimbabwe. New NGO partners include Oxfam, the International Union for Public Transportation, the Clean Air Fund, and Youth Climate Lab. The U.S. State of California joined as the first sub-regional full partner of the Coalition.

California said they have an active plan to deal with short-lived Climate Pollutants and it plays a big part the state's plan to get to carbon neutrality. California is also working with NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory to develop a small satellite to monitor methane and other short-lived climate pollutants on a global scale with the goal to collect data, identify hot spots and regulate the largest sources of methane. California invited the CCAC to work with them on this project.

Closing the meeting, Marc Chardonens, State Secretary, Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland, called for additional finances to fund the work of the Coalition. Mr Chardonens welcomed the endorsement of the Talanoa Statement, encouraged delegates to be active in the future work of the Coalition, and said the CCAC Action Programme will support national action plans.

Rodolfo Lacy, Environment Director, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, lauded the CCAC Action Programme, noting that it provides a roadmap to address SLCs, and aims to deliver high level political ambition, technical support and assistance to translate technicalities into action, and science and analytical support to spur decisive and immediate action.

Chardonens then launched the CCAC Action Programme to Address the 1.5°C Challenge, noting that the "hard work starts now."

[Click here to read the IISD/ENB report of the meeting](#)

[Click here for photos of the meeting](#)

About the Coalition

The Climate and Clean Air Coalition is a voluntary partnership of governments, intergovernmental organizations, businesses, scientific institutions and civil society organizations committed to improving air quality and protecting the climate through actions to reduce short-lived climate pollutants – methane, black carbon, hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and tropospheric ozone. It recognizes that efforts to reduce these pollutants supports all climate efforts by reducing the rate of warming in the near term, which will help prevent the likelihood of crossing climate tipping points. Efforts to reduce short-lived climate pollutants must be complementary to deep and sustained cuts to carbon dioxide emissions.

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