

### **New Report Outlines Air Pollution Measures that can Save Millions of Lives and Slow Climate Change**

*25 cost-effective measures can see 1 billion people in Asia breathing clean air by 2030*

**Geneva, October 30, 2018:** Millions of lives could be saved and one billion people living in Asia could be breathing clean air by 2030 if 25 simple and cost-effective measures are implemented, according to a [new UN report](#). Currently, about 4 billion people – 92 per cent of Asia and the Pacific’s population – are exposed to levels of air pollution that pose a significant risk to their health.

The report, [Air Pollution in Asia and the Pacific: Science-based Solutions](#), is the first comprehensive scientific assessment of the air pollution outlook in Asia and the Pacific. It details 25 policy and technological measures that will deliver benefits across sectors.

According to the report, effectively implementing the 25 measures would result in a 20% reduction in carbon dioxide and a 45% reduction in methane emissions, preventing up to a third of a degree Celsius in global warming. Resulting reductions in ground-level ozone would reduce crop losses by 45% for maize, rice, soy and wheat combined.

Approximately 7 million people worldwide die prematurely each year from air pollution related diseases, with about 4 million of these deaths occurring in Asia-Pacific. The reductions in outdoor air pollution from the 25 measures could reduce premature mortality in the region by one third, and help avoid about 2 million premature deaths from indoor air pollution.

Erik Solheim, head of UN Environment, said: “It is an unfortunate fact that breathing clean air, the most basic of human needs, has become a luxury in many parts of the world. But there are numerous tried and tested solutions that we can put in place now to solve this problem. Implementing these air quality measures is not only good for health and the environment, it can also boost innovation, job creation and economic growth.”

Implementing the 25 measures is projected to cost US\$300–600 billion per year, only about 5% of the projected annual GDP increase of US\$12 trillion. In addition to delivering substantial benefits to human health, food production, environmental protection and climate change mitigation, a basket of co-benefits will accrue, including savings on pollution control.

The analysis takes the region’s considerable diversity into account and groups the selected measures into three categories:

- Conventional emission controls focusing on emissions that lead to the formation of fine particulate matter (PM2.5). This includes activities like: increased emissions standards and controls on vehicles, power plants, and large- and small-scale industry.
- Further (next-stage) air-quality measures for reducing emissions that lead to the formation of PM2.5 and are not yet major components of clean air policies in many parts of the region.

This includes activities like: Reducing the burning of agricultural and municipal solid waste, preventing forest and peatland fires, and proper management of livestock manure.

- Measures contributing to development priority goals with benefits for air quality. This includes activities like: providing clean energy for households, improving public transport and promoting the use of electric vehicles, using renewable energy for electricity generation, and working with oil and gas companies to stop flaring and reduce leaks.

The 25 clean air measures are not equally appropriate for every part of Asia-Pacific. The region's diversity means the measures must be tailored, prioritized and implemented according to national conditions.

The report is a collaboration between the [United Nations Environment Programme](#) (UN Environment), the Asia Pacific Clean Air Partnership (APCAP), and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), and was launched at WHO's first Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health.

### More quotes

**Dr Rokho Kim, Regional Coordinator of Health and Environment, WHO, Western Pacific Region:**

“Due to rapid industrialization and urbanization, people in the Asia Pacific are suffering from the preventable deaths and disease associated with air pollution much greater than those living in other regions. For example, about 2.2 million people are dying due to air pollution in the Western Pacific every year. I hope the report will assist countries and cities in the Asia and Pacific region to protect human health and life from impacts of air pollution.”

**Takashi Ohmura, Counsellor, Ministry of Environment Japan:** “Cooperation between a variety of countries, local governments, industries and civil society organizations is essential to implement the 25 clean air measures. To foster such cooperation, regional frameworks play a significant role. We will continue to work with our partner frameworks including the Asia Pacific Clean Air Partnership and Climate and Clean Air Coalition to improve air quality. Together we can implement change for the greater good and sustainable development of Asia and the Pacific.”

**Helena Molin Valdés, Head of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition Secretariat:** “Air quality and climate change are closely related. Many of the measures outlined in this report reduce short-lived climate pollutants like methane, black carbon, hydrofluorocarbons and ground-level ozone. Rapidly reducing these powerful climate forcers and carbon dioxide is the only way to ensure we keep warming to 1.5 degree Celsius. Implementing these measures is not just a win for the health and wellbeing of the region, it is a win for the planet.”

**Report Co-Chair, Professor Yun-Chul Hong, from Seoul National University:** “In coming up with these 25 measures, state-of-the-art modelling was conducted on several hundred potential options to reduce air pollution. The report provides a clear picture of the benefits to be gained by adopting the measures and offers some implementation guidance through real-life case studies. We hope the report will act as a platform to share experiences and practical actions to prevent and control atmospheric pollution across the Asia and Pacific region.”

**Dr Johan Kuypenstierna, Policy Director at Stockholm Environment Institute:** “The solutions set out in this report, if done within 10 years, would cost only a small fraction in the increase in wealth over that time. To realize these benefits, countries will need to choose the most appropriate clean air actions from among the top 25 solutions. For example, by implementing and enforcing air pollution

controls in industry and power stations, reducing vehicle emissions, and investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency.”

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

The **report summary can be downloaded** under embargo from Monday, October 29, 13:00 CET (Geneva) from a link on this page: [ccacoalition.org/solutions](https://ccacoalition.org/solutions)

#### **About UN Environment**

UN Environment is the leading global voice on the environment. It provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. UN Environment works with governments, the private sector, civil society and with other UN entities and international organizations across the world.

#### **About the Asia-Pacific Clean Air Partnership**

Established in 2015, the Asia Pacific Clean Air Partnership is a platform for policy makers and stakeholders to share knowledge, tools and innovative solutions to tackle air pollution in the region. It brings together countries, networks and initiatives that focus on clean air in the region.

#### **About the Climate and Clean Air Coalition**

The Climate and Clean Air Coalition is a global effort uniting governments, civil society and private sector, committed to integrating air quality and climate action. It aims to reduce short-lived climate pollutants in the next few decades by supporting transformative actions, policies and regulations that lead to substantial reductions of these pollutants. Reducing short-lived climate pollutants must go hand-in-hand with deep and persistent cuts to carbon dioxide if the world is to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

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