



Press Release

CCAC Working Group Meets in Thailand

The Climate and Clean Air Coalition's Working Group met from October 8 to 10 at the UN Conference Centre in Bangkok

Bangkok, October 12, 2018: The Climate and Clean Air Coalition's 24th Working Group meeting kicked off the day after a landmark Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report was launched in Incheon, Korea. The [IPCC's Global Warming of 1.5°C report](#) reminded Coalition Partners of the urgency of their work and the important contribution reducing short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) can play to rapidly reduce the rate of warming and achieve the global climate goals.

In a call to the Working Group, Drew Shindell, Head of the Coalition's Scientific Advisory Panel (SAP) and a coordinating lead author of the 1.5°C report said the report showed that measures to reduce SLCPs need to be implemented as soon as possible.

"Waiting to 2030 before increasing ambition is too late, the drop in emissions is too steep to be achieved in any of the scenarios that the report authors looked at," Dr Shindell said. "We need change within the coming decade. We not only have to switch our trajectory from up to down, but it has to drop very rapidly during the 2020's, so that by 2030 we are at half our current carbon dioxide emissions and between one and two thirds of current SLCP emissions, otherwise we can't make the 1.5°C target."

The inclusion of black carbon and methane in the IPCC report is an important milestone for the Coalition as it encourages partner and non-partner countries alike to ramp up ambition and efforts to reduce SLCPs.

A focus on Asia Pacific

In the Asia Pacific region the need to tackle both air pollution and climate change at the same time is leading to increased efforts to find integrated solutions. Many countries now have ambitious air pollution and climate programs.

Dr. Wijarn Simachaya, Permanent Secretary of Thailand's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, opened the meeting and welcomed delegates to Bangkok saying air pollution is related to the global concern of climate change and there is a collective responsibility to take action to slow this problem.

Thailand is integrating air pollution and climate change efforts by reducing black carbon through stringent new vehicle emissions standards, controlling open burning, promoting the use of ultra-low sulfur fuels, and converting waste-to-energy. Dr Simachaya also noted that air pollution is transboundary by nature and addressing it requires collaboration. Sharing experiences and good practices with regional partners is therefore an important part of Thailand's air quality work.

The Asia Pacific region is heavily impacted by air pollution. Dechen Tsering, Head of UN Environment's Asia Pacific regional office said it is a growing concern not lost to those that live there and to governments and policy makers.

"As the Asia Pacific grows, people are asking how to bring back blue skies? Mothers are asking what does this mean for us and our children? This is about families, development and sustainability," Ms. Tsering said. "We need to look at air pollution in the context of sustainable development."

Ms. Tsering announced that an upcoming UN Environment and CCAC report will outline 25 solutions that governments can take to rapidly reduce air pollution. She called on the Working Group to help implement the solutions.

"We have a lot of solutions that are home grown. In many countries we have very ambitious programs and we are starting to see success in many places across Asia," Ms Tsering said.

The *Air Pollution in Asia and the Pacific: Science-based Solutions* report will be launched on October 30 at the World Health Organization's first Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health.

The Maldives, New Zealand, Japan, Vietnam and the Asia Development Bank all presented the actions they are taking in the Asia Pacific region to reduce SLCPs.

The Maldives is working to roll out its implementation of the Kigali Amendment early, including efforts to reduce hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) in its tourism sector and moving to HFC alternatives in its fishery sector. It is also moving to reduce both black carbon and methane emissions from municipal solid waste.

New Zealand's biggest source of greenhouse gases comes from its agriculture sector. By improving livestock productivity, it has managed to avoid a 47% increase in emissions. By 2022, New Zealand farms will need to create management plans that set out how they will reduce emissions. The New Zealand government will make 2% of the country's GDP available for these efforts by 2027. New Zealand continues to support global research into reducing agriculture emissions.

Japan noted that it has taken considerable efforts to improve air pollution and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and that since the 1980s there have been continuous air quality improvements. Japan supports regional objectives for air pollution and promotes cooperation in technological developments through initiatives like the Asia-Pacific Clean Air Partnership (APCAP) and the Asian co-benefits partnership.

Vietnam is also looking to reduce emissions in its agriculture sector, which accounts for 50% of its GDP. Vietnam's national agriculture conversion plan aims to switch farmers from rice production (a large source of the country's methane emissions) to other products. It is also looking to prevent agricultural burning by working with companies to turn straw and rice husks into other products like bricks.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) outlined its seven operational priorities, all of which touch on climate and clean air efforts. Through its technical assistance program, ADB is strengthening knowledge and actions for air quality improvement in four primary and four secondary cities in Bangladesh, Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippines and Vietnam. The aim is to build a business case for air quality management by helping cities assess their situation and actions, and look at inventories and source apportionment.

The Working Group also looked at the global work being carried out in each of the Coalition's initiatives.

Enhancing ambition

The CCAC Secretariat also reported back on three Ministerial Roundtables that took place over the year on the margins of regional climate meetings. These roundtables increased and sustained the engagement of ministers and focused on the question 'What does ambition to reach the Paris Agreement look like'?

[The first roundtable](#) was led by James Shaw, New Zealand's Minister for Climate Change, and brought together ministers from the Asia-Pacific region on the margins of the Special ASEAN Climate Action Meeting in Singapore in July. [The second](#) was led by Jorge Rucks, Undersecretary at Uruguay's Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment. It took place on the margins of the Latin America and Caribbean Climate Week in Montevideo in August. And [the most recent](#) was led by Ola Elvestuen, Norway's Minister for Climate and the Environment, on the margins of this year's UN General Assembly. That roundtable built off the Coalition's Talanoa Statement, which he [launched in San Francisco](#) the week before during the Global Climate Action Summit.

The Coalition's [Talanoa Statement](#) is open for endorsement by any country or organization. Finland, the United Nations Development Programme, and the World Health Organization, endorsed the statement during the Working Group meeting. Coalition partners were encouraged to endorse the statement prior to the December 11 deadline.

Poland shared how their arrangements for COP24 in Katowice, Poland are shaping up. The Talanoa dialogue and other mandated events are important for the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement and will feed into the key output of COP24 – an agreed Paris Agreement Work Programme.

As part of efforts to raise climate ambition in the lead up to the UN Secretary General's in September 2019, the Working Group agreed to set up a task team to develop a strategy and work programme that would increase the ambition of national climate plans and mid-century strategies, and apply an integrated approach to climate and air quality based on the Coalition's multiple benefits pathway framework. Such a programme could help bring on board new countries and organisations and increase high-level engagement from several sectors and regions.

Norway and Chile presented the Coalition's "Multiple Benefits Pathway Framework" and its Communications Strategy. They noted that the framework is aligned with the plan for implementation of the Talanoa Statement, and is ready to roll-out and enhance ambition in 2019 and beyond. The framework is a practical application which countries and regions can use to plan and understand the climate and clean air benefits from integrated mitigation strategies and analyse and track the impact of their actions. It builds upon existing national processes and can empower governments and others to make decisions and define ambition in line with near-term sustainable development goals and the Paris Climate Agreement's temperature target.

Norway pledged an additional \$250,000 to the Coalition trust fund for 2018.

Contact:

Tiy Chung, CCAC Communications Officer, tiy.chung@unep.org, +33 6 26 71 79 81