Press Release

Efforts to reduce short-lived climate pollutants strengthened at COP21

**Paris, December 8, 2015** – Members of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) committed today to accelerate ambitious action to reduce short-lived climate pollutants within the next five years. The CCAC Paris Communique, endorsed today by 49 Ministers, 16 intergovernmental organizations and 44 NGOs, resolves to “prioritise, develop and implement measures that lead to the delivery of SLCP reductions at scale in the near- to medium-term, aiming to achieve significant climate, health and numerous other benefits.”

The importance of the work was matched financially with countries committing a total of $12 million to the Coalition’s trust fund and 100’s of millions of dollars to reduce SLCPs worldwide.

Recent air quality episodes and climate disasters remind us that the fight is far from over and that we must reinforce our commitment to face both climate change and air pollution through synergistic policies that are essential for our health and our climate future.

In a message delivered to delegates United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki Moon said, “The Climate and Clean Air Coalition is an impressive example of a partnership that can deliver results. We must act urgently to limit carbon dioxide emissions to keep global temperature rise below two degrees Celsius. In addition we need immediate action to control short-lived climate pollutants, not only to mitigate warming, but to reduce air pollution and improve public health.”

The CCAC also launched its Five Year Strategic Plan at the assembly. Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) said SLCPs reduction had immediate benefits for the climate and livelihoods.

“We have to rapidly reduce SLCPs as quickly as possible to avoid irreversible tipping points and stay below 2 degrees warming,” Mr Steiner said. “The 5 Year Strategic Plan of the CCAC that launched today will drive ambitious action to do so in the post-Paris time.”

Catherine McKenna, Canada’s Minister of Environment and Climate Change reminded participants that Short-lived climate pollutants are responsible for a substantial portion of the current rate of global warming.

“Sustained reductions can help slow the rate of near-term warming, globally and in sensitive regions, such as the Arctic. As a Northern country with a vast Arctic territory – this is extremely important to Canada,” Ms McKenna said. “As a result, Canada is pleased to commit $35 million dollars over five years to address short lived climate pollutants, with $10 million to be dedicated to the CCAC Trust Fund.”
Morocco’s Environment Minister, Hakima El Haite said the CCAC could make real impact for public health. “Thanks to all of the achievements we will carry out in this sector we will be able to save millions of lives,” she said.

Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization, said the Coalition’s emphasis on fast action was refreshing.

“There is a double benefit to actions, they are good for climate change in the longer term and in the immediate short term, very good for reducing air pollution. The payback of this coalition’s actions is measured in reduced air pollution, improved food security, improved energy access and better health,” Dr Chan said. “A healthy planet is good for the health of the people of our world.”

Marcelo Mena, Chile’s Vice Minister for Environment and CCAC Co-Chair said, “We need to integrate climate policy and air pollution policy, or else we’re causing massive distortions in our environmental priorities. In Chile we equally match our climate and air pollution policies. We are looking to save lives. And reducing black carbon and methane saves lives. Today. No calculation needed.”

Many countries also committed to continue important work on curbing the use of Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) building on an announcement last November in Dubai that would see an amendment negotiated for the phase down of these highly warming gases under the Montreal Protocol. This could achieve the equivalent to the avoided emissions of one hundred billion tons of CO₂ by 2050.

Gina McCarthy, Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, said there would need to be active engagement at every level. “We have an opportunity to leverage the full strength and political leadership of the CCAC to help deliver a global HFC phasedown,” Ms McCarthy said. “I know we can collaborate together and with other countries to get the job done.”

Drew Shindell, Professor of Climate Sciences at Duke University and Chair of the CCAC Scientific Advisory Panel, said reducing SLCPs leads to a profound slowing of the rate of near term warming. “But we cannot get down to 1.5°C without targeting both SLCPs and CO₂. We can’t even keep below two degrees without targeting both,” Professor Shindell said.

Moldova was welcomed as the newest member of the Coalition bringing the total number of partners to 110: 50 countries and 60 non-state organisations.

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Quotes:

“A week ago the Norwegian Environment Agency launched a new assessment that proves that several actions targeting long-term climate effects also have benefits for short-term climate effects and health. We are pleased that the CCAC has adopted a strategic plan for the next five years work -- together with tools for measuring the impact of our shared efforts – further strengthening the Coalitions work. Norway is happy to announce that in 2015 and 2016 a contribution of $1.8 million to the CCAC Trust Fund.” Jens Frølic Holte, Political Adviser, Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment.
“Acting to reduce emissions of methane, HFCS and other short-lived climate pollutants is critical if we are to aim to keep the global temperature rise well below 2°C. Australia will provide $200,000 to the Coalition’s trust fund this financial year, with further funding contingent on the progress of Coalition projects. We will continue to engage with the CCAC as we pursue a greener economy.” Julie Bishop, Foreign Minister, Australia.

“We commit to raise awareness and model the way in addressing SLCPs in the Asia-Pacific region including the ASEAN community. Soon, we will build a South-South Cooperation Centre of Excellence in the Philippines, where we will welcome Partners to come together for knowledge-sharing and peer to peer learning.” Emmanuel de Guzman, Secretary of Climate Change, Philippines

“We have prepared and Endorsed Bangladesh’s National Plan for Reduction of SLCPs as the Coalition country that includes the globally adopted 16 SLCP reduction measures. We have put SLCP reduction in our new National Environment Policy. By being included in our policy and planning map, SLCP reductions has become a mainstream action for the government.” Anwar Hossain Manju, Minister of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh.

“A lot has been achieved in only three years. Now is the time to ask ourselves what more we can do and how we can scale up our actions. I want the coalition to deliver. To act as a catalyst for ambitious action, the coalition should: focus on actions with the greatest potential to succeed and work on establishing real partnerships between governments, companies, international organisations and NGOs. The Netherlands will focus its action and cooperation on Green Transport and Waste management. Our action-oriented approach gives me hope for the future, and the Dutch government will remain a strong supporter of the CCAC.” Sharon Dijksma, Minister Infrastructure and the Environment, the Netherlands

“I applaud action underway between the CCAC and other partners, including the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA), on improving efficiency in livestock chains in the context of methane emissions. New Zealand will continue to support this work, including a new contribution of NZ$20 million to 2020 for activities under the GRA.” Tim Groser, Minister for Climate Change Issues, New Zealand

“Nigeria has benefitted from CCAC support for National Action Planning and Institutional Strengthening, and is engaged in work-streams on clean cooking, bricks, HFCs, oil and gas, and waste, with the city of Lagos. We are pleased with the leadership role to strengthen regional approaches, for example, to replicate the effort by East African countries on fuel quality in other sub-regions of the continent.” Nigeria

“Reducing SLCPs is a winner for everyone and that it is important that we don’t lose sight of how important, how beneficial, and how immediate action in this area is. So let’s get on with it.” Edmund (Jerry) Brown, Governor of California.

"The world is claiming for urgent action that can deliver fast this is exactly what SLCPs mitigation is. The CCAC is called to play a prominent role to deliver the mitigation that is needed in the next years to avoid irreversible climate change" Durwood Zaelke, President, Institute of Governance and Sustainable Development.

"Action at scale on SLCPs can cut the rate of global warming by half preventing much suffering of the most vulnerable ones. These actions are not only technically and economic affordable but in the current situation of the Planet are morally mandatory." Romina Picolotti President Center for Human Rights and Environment
“The private sector has a great opportunity to accelerate decarbonization by reducing short-lived climate pollutants like methane, HFCs, and black carbon. Even better, this effort delivers a triple win of combatting climate change while also delivering immediate health improvements and economic benefits. BSR is proud to be partnering with the CCAC to increase the business commitment to fighting SLCPs.” Aron Cramer, CEO and President, BSR

“The 2011 UNEP/WMO report, which led to the launch of this Coalition, suggested 16 global measures as most important for taking action on black carbon and methane. But what this means for your country? How do you prioritize? IASS is working to develop approaches to provide region and country specific answers to these kinds of questions.” Mark Lawrence, Scientific Director, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies

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About CCAC
The Climate and Clean Air Coalition is a voluntary global partnership of governments, intergovernmental organizations, businesses, scientific institutions and civil society committed to catalyzing concrete, substantial action to reduce Short Lived Climate Pollutants (including methane, black carbon and many hydrofluorocarbons). The Coalition has 11 initiatives working to raise awareness, mobilize resources and lead transformative actions in key emitting and cross cutting sectors. SLCP reduction must go hand in hand with deep and persistent cuts to carbon dioxide and other long-lived greenhouse gases if we are to stay under a 2 degrees Celsius warming limit. The CCAC Secretariat is hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme.