



Press Release

Latin America and Caribbean countries look to maximise benefits from climate action

Integrating climate action and air quality efforts seen as essential to advancing regional ambition on climate action.

Montevideo, August 22, 2018: The benefits of integrating climate action and air quality efforts were at the core of side-events hosted by the Climate and Clean Air Coalition during the [Latin American and Caribbean Climate Week](#) in Montevideo, Uruguay.

Representatives from the region discussed how an integrated approach, developed by the Coalition, can help countries maximise national benefits, help deliver the [2030 Sustainable Development Goals](#), and increase ambition to meet the [Paris Agreement](#) goal to limit warming to 1.5° Celsius.

Helena Molin Valdés, Head of the UN Environment hosted Climate and Clean Air Coalition, said the path the world takes to achieving the Paris Agreement temperature target was just as important as the goal itself.

“Limiting warming to well under 2° Celsius and ensuring sustainable development to improve livelihoods are the global challenges of our time. They are not mutually exclusive. We can, and must, achieve both,” Ms Molin Valdés said. “By picking a pathway that rapidly reduces short-lived climate pollutants, together with deep and persistent cuts to carbon dioxide, we can reduce both near and long-term warming. Improved air quality from these actions will improve health, food and energy security, and decrease the likelihood of dangerous climate feedbacks. It’s a win-win-win path for us and the planet.”

The Coalition’s Latin American Countries are implementing an integrated climate and air quality strategy that can deliver real-world multiple benefits for human health, agriculture and the climate, by reducing short-lived climate pollutants like methane, hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), and black carbon.

Jorge Rucks, Undersecretary at Uruguay’s Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment, opened the Coalition’s High Level Technical Dialogue on 22 August.

The event was attended by high-level technical representatives from the climate change and air quality departments of Uruguay, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica and Ecuador, and by Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the UN Framework on Climate Change. Marcelo Mena, Chile’s former Minister of Environment, also participated in his new role as Practice Manager, Climate Research and Analytics, of the Climate Change Group at the World Bank.

Patricia Espinosa said climate change is a development agenda and that its adverse effects can impact the use of natural resources and air quality. She stressed the importance of collective action and increased commitment by countries to reach the Paris Agreement goal of keeping global temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The World Bank said approaches that integrate climate and air quality actions are important to build climate change resilience and reduce the economic losses that disproportionately affect poor people.

Speaking at a high-level session during climate week, Enzo Benech, Uruguay's Minister of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries said it was important to link the Paris Agreement with the 2030 Global Sustainable Development Goals, and that as part of Uruguay's Climate and Sustainable Development Agenda, he is dedicated to pushing policies that reduce methane emissions from agriculture through sustainable intensification of livestock production.

These policies are consistent with Uruguay's climate change and sustainable development objectives. Uruguay's work with the Climate and Clean Air Coalition has helped them identify mitigation options to reduce methane emission intensity per unit of production without compromising food production and livelihoods.

The Coalition's Multiple Benefits Pathway Approach side-event took place on 23 August where Mexico, Chile and Uruguay demonstrated how they've applied this planning framework.

The Multiple Benefits Pathway approach enables decision-makers to compare different policies and measures, in terms of temperature and the local and global benefits they provide over the near- and long-term. The assessments also help countries identify strategies that provide the maximum benefits across a range of climate and development indicators, and ambitious mitigation actions most appropriate to their national contexts.

Countries shared their emissions reduction activities and the impacts they've had on near- and long-term warming. They also highlighted the important multiple-benefits these actions can provide. Participants thanked the Coalition for hosting the side-events and encouraged it to continue to be a platform for South-South Cooperation. They called on the Coalition to help advance an integrated climate and clean air agenda by raising awareness about the additional and multiple benefits from actions to reduce short-lived climate pollutants and air pollution, and to help countries implement the Multiple Benefits Pathway Approach.

This framework provides planners with the tools and information to understand, compare, and communicate the impacts of their actions on global temperature and air quality over time, while also benefitting people's lives today, and contributing to the achievement of the sustainable development Goals by 2030.

Country Activities:

- **Uruguay** is working with the Coalition to develop their black carbon inventory and is conducting integrated climate and air quality modelling from key emitting sectors including, methane from livestock, and black carbon from the transport, household heating and bricks sectors.
- **Costa Rica** is conducting a robust analysis of technology options available to assess their multiple benefit impacts, and is working with the Coalition to improve their emissions inventories and reporting metrics in order to better model scenarios across the transport, energy industry, and residential energy sectors.

- **Chile** is working on a black carbon inventory and has included short-lived climate pollutants in their National Action Plan on Climate Change with a focus on two key emitting sectors, transport and domestic heating.
- **Mexico** is incorporating black carbon, other short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs), and GHGs as part of an integrated climate change, air quality strategy that will feed into their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)
- **Dominican Republic** has incentivised hybrid vehicle imports as part of the island's sustainable development strategy to reduce fuel consumption and environmental and health impacts.
- **Ecuador** (a non-Coalition Partner) has developed an electric mobility plan as part of their Country Strategy and are working with Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to develop a climate smart livestock sector. Short-Lived Climate Pollutants are being tackled at the local government level but there is interest to elevate these activities nationally to improve air quality monitoring.

Key messages from the events

1. **Fast action on all climate forcers is necessary to establish a sustainable pathway and to succeed in achieving our long-term temperature goal.** Strong mitigation actions on reducing methane, HFCs and black carbon, short-lived climate pollutants, as a key component of an integrated climate and air quality strategy, can deliver real-world multiple benefits for human health, agriculture and the climate. Scaled-up action on short-lived climate pollutants can avoid 0.6°C of predicted warming by 2050, and is needed to achieve the Paris temperature goal.
2. **Actions targeting SLCPs are designed to provide near-term benefits to supplement and enhance necessary scaled-up actions on CO₂.** This can be done with new policies and measures for short-lived climate pollutants mitigation within an economy-wide target, or as a sectoral/gas (pollutant) short-lived climate pollutant target. Short-lived climate pollutant mitigation is critical, but must be part of a broader climate and air quality strategy which includes fast abatement of CO₂.
3. **Enhancing Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) ambition.** Climate and Clean Air Coalition countries are adopting a multiple benefits pathway approach - a practical framework that enables countries to integrate air pollution and climate change and analyse and track the impact of mitigation activities. Identifying which activities can provide the greatest temperature reductions and additional benefits can help countries raise their climate ambition.
4. **Assess all relevant air pollutants and climate pollutants,** noting that their sources are closely interlinked, and many air pollutants have important impacts on the climate, it is important for countries to assess air pollutants in an integrated manner. This can help identify win-win emission reduction policies and, just as importantly, win-lose scenarios where wins in one sector needs to be balanced with activities that offsets losses in another.

Contact:

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