

Cities Join Forces with the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Tackle Solid Waste

Vancouver, 12 March 2013 – Ten major cities from every region in the world, including Rio de Janeiro, New York, and Ho Chi Minh City, came together in Vancouver to pave the way for significantly reducing short-lived climate pollutants from solid waste. The gathering followed months of on-the-ground assessments in cooperation with the Municipal Solid Waste initiative of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition – a transformative global partnership of countries, international organizations, NGOs, and the private sector, seeking to rapidly reduce SLCPs like black carbon, methane, and HFCs.

Municipal solid waste is the third largest source of human-caused methane emissions, a greenhouse gas over 20 times more potent than CO₂. The methane comes from decomposing waste in landfills, while open burning of uncollected waste can cause black carbon emissions, contributing to poor air quality and health impacts in many cities.

This sector is a rapidly growing challenge – the World Bank estimates the amount of global municipal waste generation will nearly double from 1.3 billion tons per year today to 2.2 billion tons per year by 2025. In many cities solid waste management is the largest budget item, and yet immense challenges remain to improve these systems.

The leading cities participating in the initiative will work with the Coalition over the coming year to, for example, close open dumps, use organic waste to produce energy and compost, and harness valuable methane leaking from landfills. The Coalition will support cities through state-of-the-art technical expertise, funding for sharing experiences and exchanging experts, laying the foundations for new projects, and identifying financing options in partnership with the World Bank and other experts.

The International Solid Waste Association is fully supportive of this ground-breaking initiative. “Improvements in waste management offer an immediate and cost effective means to transform the waste sector into a net carbon reducer. Existing technologies can be deployed at scale in virtually all regions and cities,” said ISWA President David Newman.

The C40 Cities network has been involved with the initiative since its launch in June 2012 and several C40 cities are now playing a leadership role. “We are very excited about the progress of the CCAC Municipal Solid Waste Initiative since we launched at Rio+20,” said Dr. Rohit Aggarwala, Advisor to the C40 Chair Mayor Bloomberg. “New funding for city exchanges, technical assistance for a network of C40 cities, and the focus on fostering knowledge exchange and connections between peers from across city administrations will lead to emission reductions within the world's mega-cities.”

“The Municipal Solid Waste Initiative of the CCAC is designed to be driven by participating cities and countries, implementing solutions that respond to their individual, complex needs. These solutions will achieve not just incremental progress but transformative change at the scale needed to bring

climate and health benefits at the local and global levels," said Kaveh Zahedi, Deputy Director of UNEP Division of Technology Industry and Economics and Interim Head of the CCAC Secretariat.

Mayor Eduardo Paes reinforced Rio's commitment to this issue, where over 9,000 tons of waste are disposed every day. "The City of Rio de Janeiro has been committed to reducing greenhouse emissions as part of its strategic plan, where the improvement of the solid waste management system is one of its action plans. In this regard, the city has been implementing several actions to enhance the system, such as implementing a new state-of-the-art landfill in Seropédica, creating one of the largest biogas purification plants in the world, as well as composting the organic residues from markets. Rio de Janeiro considers the partnership with CCAC an opportunity to further advance these initiatives. We are committed to leading the dissemination of these practices, so we are working closely with international institutions like C40, which has been strategically supporting us on this endeavor."

Participating cities include Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Cali, Colombia; Viña del Mar, Chile; New York City, USA; Stockholm, Sweden; Accra, Ghana; Lagos, Nigeria; Penang, Malaysia; Dhaka, Bangladesh; Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam; and Tokyo, Japan.

The CCAC will be extending this international network to dozens of additional cities by the end of 2013 and will be welcoming additional expressions of interest in the coming months.

Background

The Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) is a transformative global partnership of countries, international organizations, NGOs, and the private sector, seeking to rapidly reduce short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) like black carbon, methane, and HFCs.

The CCAC launched its Municipal Solid Waste Initiative jointly with C40 in partnership with the Clinton Climate Initiative at the UN Rio+20 conference, where former President Bill Clinton, Mayor Bloomberg of New York, and Governor Babatunde Fashola of Lagos, Nigeria encouraged cities around the world to join.

This partnership brings together organizations and governments with decades of experience across the municipal solid waste sector, including: U.S. EPA, Environment Canada, Ministry of Environment Japan, the Global Methane Initiative, the World Bank, C40-CCI Cities, the UN Environment Programme, the International Solid Waste Association, the Clinton Climate Initiative Waste and Water Team, the Center for Clean Air Policy, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, and many others.

According to the UN Environment Programme, aggressive action on SLCPs could head off 0.5 degrees C of warming by 2050, prevent over two million premature deaths each year, and avoid over 30 million tons of annual crop losses by 2030. Since its launch in February 2012, the CCAC has grown from six countries to 30, totaling 60 international partners.

The Coalition's work is entirely complementary to efforts to reduce CO₂, including efforts under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Coalition is currently implementing seven international initiatives:

- Mitigating SLCPs from landfills and municipal solid waste;
- Reducing black carbon emissions from heavy duty diesel vehicles and engines;
- Reducing SLCPs and other pollutants from brick production;
- Promoting HFC alternative technology and standards;
- Financing mitigation of SLCPs ;
- Supporting national action planning on SLCPs; and

- Accelerating methane and black carbon reductions from global oil and natural gas production.

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.

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