



**CLIMATE &  
CLEAN AIR  
COALITION**  
TO REDUCE SHORT-LIVED  
CLIMATE POLLUTANTS

# PRESS RELEASE

## Governments, International Organisations, and NGOs move to protect lives and the climate from dangerous air pollution.

**Geneva, May 22, 2015:** “Steps to address short-lived climate pollutants are now seen as an essential complement of the aggressive mitigation actions needed to combat climate change,” United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said in a statement at the opening of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition’s (CCAC) High Level Assembly in Geneva this week.

“The Coalition’s mobilization of concrete actions to reduce emissions by 2020 promises high-impact results,” Mr Ban said. “These efforts will protect the climate, our environment and improve the health and lives of people across the globe.”

The CCAC High Level Assembly took place on the margins of the 68th World Health Assembly to bring attention to the strong links between air pollution, human health and climate change. Tine Sundtoft, Norway’s Minister for Climate and Environment and Co-Chair of the Assembly, said that reducing short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs), like black carbon, methane, tropospheric ozone and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), provided multiple benefits for health and climate.

“If we manage to reduce short lived climate pollution, we not only save millions of lives but also reduce global warming by as much as 0.6 degrees by 2050. This will be a significant contribution to limit global warming to 2 degrees,” Ms Sundtoft said. “This is some of the most important work the world community can do in the coming years. Often there are small and cheap efforts that are needed, such as using solar energy to heat and light up houses. But this isn’t only about emissions from poor countries. For instance, diesel vehicles cause significant health problem in big cities across the world. Thus we have a considerable task ahead of us.”

A key result of the High Level Assembly was the passing of a strategic plan to scale up the CCAC’s work over the next five years. A task force, chaired by the United States in close consultation with partners, looked at ways to advance policies, regulations, programs, and practices that can quickly deliver substantial reductions in harmful climate and air pollutants in the short term, while transforming sectors so they continue to deliver results into the future.

The plan calls for short-lived climate pollutants to be put on the policy map and become a priority for governments, the private sector and civil society around the world. It also called for more peer to peer support between partners to share expertise and provide technical assistance where needed. To do this the CCAC should prioritize work that is scientifically grounded, politically feasible, cost-effective, provide measurable results in the near-term, and has the potential to lead to greater SLCP reductions.

One group of SLCPs, hydrofluorocarbons (or HFCs) used in refrigeration and air conditioning, is an extremely powerful climate forcing gas. The CCAC partners supported a statement on HFCs introduced by Canada as an example of how the Coalition will promote ambitious action and build

strategic partnerships with other efforts. The HLA noted their support for a phase down of HFC under the Montreal Protocol and noted the importance to discuss these issues at the Protocol's upcoming July meeting.

The HLA expressed its support of the HFC initiative's activities to improve knowledge and highlight the range of climate friendly alternatives available. The CCAC will also further promote public procurement of climate-friendly alternatives to high-Global Warming Potential (GWP) HFCs, responsible refrigerant management practices and approaches, and the greening of food cold chain through low-GWP technologies and reducing food waste.

The High Level Assembly also recognized the tragic events following the earthquake in Nepal and agreed to fund work with on a feasibility study to rebuild the country's damaged brick industry in a way that reduces black carbon pollution and increases kiln efficiency. Brick is the traditional building material in Nepal and every brick kiln in Kathmandu was damaged by the May, 2015, earthquake. All will need to be rebuilt. 10% of buildings in Nepal also need rebuilding. The rise in demand for building materials presents an opportunity to ensure that Nepal's brick industry is cleaner and safer for people and the environment. The study will also look at alternative building materials and earthquake safe construction practices.

SLCPs stay in the atmosphere for a relatively short time (from days to years) and reduction efforts can produce results relatively quickly. Marcelo Mena, Chile's Vice Minister for Environment and Assembly Co-chair, told delegates that Chile's efforts to reduce air pollution were already showing results.

"In May 2014 we unveiled a strategy that focuses on 14 new pollution attainment plans in areas covering 87% of the health risk associated with air pollution," Mr Mena said. "We worked with the Ministry of Health, to declare 'Sanitary Alerts' which allows for extreme measures on bad air days allowing us to ban visible smoke among other measures."

"In one year we reduced air quality episodes in most cities by between 20 and 30 percent. The Ministry of Health showed that our measures reduced medical visits by 25,000 cases and the department of Environmental Economy estimates that we reduced premature mortality by 270 cases last year."

Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), who also co-chaired the meeting said the CCAC was "an incredible Coalition that is doing a lot", and urged it to continue to grow in size and influence. In three years the CCAC has grown rapidly from a founding group of six countries and UNEP to a Coalition of 47 countries, 13 International Government Organisations, and 44 Non-Government Organisations. The Philippines is the latest member, joining at this latest meeting.

The United States and Norway pledged \$4 million and \$1 million respectively, to fund the ongoing work of the CCAC. A CCAC and World Bank Group led report on ways to increase private and public finance to reduce black carbon pollution was also released at the High Level Assembly.

**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.

**ENDS**

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