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

PRESS RELEASE

Improved Brick Kiln Technology Promises Benefits for Health, Agriculture, and Climate

Kathmandu, Nepal, 10 May 2013 – Two days of discussion here among experts from 11 countries have concluded that significant progress is possible against the health, agriculture and climate damage caused by much of the brick production in the world.

Participants at the "South-South Exchange Workshop on Brick Technology and Policy" identified solutions, such as modern brickmaking technologies, which produce far less pollution that older technologies; alternative building materials, such as fly ash; and increased political recognition of the problems, especially in the major brick making countries of Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

Participants also emphasized the importance of inter-ministerial coordination among ministries of housing, industry, health, agriculture and environment to achieve large-scale reductions at the national level.

Bricks are a primary construction material used in many regions, and brick production is known to be a highly polluting activity, resulting in emissions of short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs), such as black carbon, along with a range of other pollutants.

The Workshop was convened by the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (CCAC) and jointly hosted by the National Institute of Ecology in Mexico and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) in Kathmandu.

In his opening address, Secretary Krishna Gyawali of the Ministry of Industry in Nepal emphasized the urgency of the problem, noting that the brick sector consumes more than 50 percent of the total coal in Nepal. He noted the importance of continued research on black carbon by ICIMOD and others in relation to the melting of the Himalayas and glaciers around the world. "It is time now to accelerate mitigation of black carbon and other pollutants from key sources, such as brick kilns," he said.

The majority of brick kilns in operation are traditional kilns, also referred to as artisanal kilns. The primary fuels used to fire the bricks are coal, wood, local biomass and any available low-cost fuel or scavenged fuel, such as bunker fuel, waste oil, used tires, sawdust, plastics, battery cases and dung. Limited access to electricity makes it a challenge to modernize and mechanize the sector.

The CCAC will carry on the discussion and consider priorities for reducing SLCPs from brick production at its next meeting in July 2013.

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.

ICIMOD

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is a regional intergovernmental learning and knowledge sharing centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush Himalayan (HKH) region – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan. Our aim is to influence policy and practices to meet environmental and livelihood challenges emerging in the HKH region. To do this we bring together researchers, practitioners, and policy makers from the region and around the globe to generate and share knowledge, support evidence-based decision making, and encourage regional collaboration. ICIMOD delivers impact through its six Regional Programmes of Adaptation to Change, Transboundary Landscapes, River Basins, Cryosphere and Atmosphere, Mountain Environment Regional Information System, and Himalayan University Consortium. These regional programmes are supported by the four Thematic Areas of Livelihoods, Ecosystem Services, Water and Air, and Geospatial Solutions and underpinned by Knowledge Management and Communication. ICIMOD seeks to improve the lives and livelihoods of mountain women and men, now and for the future.

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