



**United Nations Environment Programme
Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean**

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PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT

**Eighteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of
Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean
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31 January to 3 February 2012**

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A. PREPARATORY MEETING OF EXPERTS
31 January to 1 February 2012

**Elements for a
Framework Agreement on
Atmospheric Pollution in
Latin America and the Caribbean**

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Background

1. Taking into account that atmospheric pollution is detrimental to human well-being and ecosystems, including its negative impacts on health, agricultural productivity, food security, economic sustainability and the climate system, UNEP promotes and supports the adoption of concrete actions to reduce it, through mechanisms such as South-South cooperation, and through preventive measures tailored to specific regions and circumstances.
2. In this regard, UNEP collaborates at the global level and in the Latin American and Caribbean region with the Global Atmospheric Pollution Forum and is a founder and Clearing-House of the global Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV) and the Global Fuel Economy Initiative (GFEI) to ensure global and regional action on the topic of air pollution and climate change mitigation.
3. To this end, the topic of atmospheric pollution was submitted for consideration at the XVI Forum of Ministers of Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean¹ where two decisions were reached²: the first one, is directly related to the topic of atmospheric pollution and recognizes the increase in such pollution in the region, which negatively affects the health and quality of life of the population, where it was decided to integrate the Intergovernmental Network on Atmospheric Pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean³, and the second one refers to the need to advocate for improvement in the quality of fuels, through cleaner fuels targeting a goal of 50 parts per million of sulfur for both petrol and diesel and cleaner, more efficient vehicles.
4. During the XVII Forum of Ministers of Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean⁴, discussions around atmospheric pollution were maintained again, based on the expert meetings and reports submitted for discussion, and one decision⁵ was approved addressing the following aspects: (i) the recognition of the Intergovernmental Network on Air Pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean; (ii) the need for a discussion on the Framework Agreement on Air Pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean, proposed by the Intergovernmental Network on Air Pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean, to continue with an effective regional dialogue on the issue; and (iii) the request for a formulation of a proposal of a regional action plan.
5. Within this context, on the opportunity of the meeting of Ministers and high level representatives and UNEP which took place in Mexico City on 12 September 2011, suggestions have been received to include in the Framework Agreement on Air Pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean elements addressing short lived climate forcers (SLCF). The meeting hosted by Mexico and Sweden, with support from the United States and Canada, discussed the

¹ Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 27th January to 1st February, 2008.

² Decision 7 (Atmospheric pollution) and Decision 8 (Better fuels for a better quality of life)

³ Panama City, March 25-27, 2009, creation of the Intergovernmental Network on Atmospheric Pollution for Latin America and the Caribbean.

⁴ Panama City, Panama, 26th to 30th April, 2010

⁵ Decision 6 (Atmospheric pollution)

benefits that reducing emissions of SLCFs would have in mitigating climate change, improving air quality and human health, improving energy efficiency, capturing clean energy resources, and reducing damage to ecosystems and agriculture.

6. The meeting in September demonstrated strong support for an action-oriented initiative at the global level that would also support national and regional measures. All parties stressed that action on SLCFs should be complementary to efforts under the UNFCCC, particularly with regard to long term CO₂ mitigation.
7. Emissions of short-lived climate forcers (SLCFs), including methane, black carbon, ozone precursors, and many HFCs, are responsible for 30 to 40 percent of current global warming influence, and have significant detrimental health and environmental impacts. Control of SLCFs would have immediate and multiple benefits for human well-being. Moreover, reducing SLCFs now will slow the rate of climate change within the first half of this century.
8. In addition to the above and in response to the request expressed by the Forum of Ministers in 2010, a regional process of consultation with technical specialists in the area of atmospheric pollution from the Ministries of Environment of all countries in the region is being coordinated.
9. In the process towards the organization of the first regional consultation, the following steps are being planned:
 - a. The Ministers of Environment of the region will appoint a national focal point for atmospheric pollution;
 - b. Relevant technical documents (including the revised proposal of the framework agreement) is being shared with the appointed focal points;
 - c. The first regional consultation meeting is planned in April/May 2012;
 - d. Funds are mobilized to ensure that additional 1 -2 regional consultation meetings can be undertaken, in line with the proposed plan for regional activities.

Framework Agreement on Atmospheric Pollution in Latin America and the Caribbean

1. Regional Cooperation

- 1.1. Cooperate in the preparation of flexible and differentiated agreements to maximize reduction and control of atmospheric pollutants;
- 1.2. Consider the synergies and shared benefits obtained through taking joint measures against the emission of atmospheric pollutants, including greenhouse gases and short-lived climate forcers;
- 1.3. Develop and align among the States, as much as possible, the policies, guidelines, legislation, standards, monitoring procedures and data management procedures with respect to atmospheric pollutants management at national level;
- 1.4. Promote the exchange of information and research on, and technology for, atmospheric pollutant management through sub-regional networks and data bases;
- 1.5. Provide support and technical assistance in identifying the sources of pollution and their impacts on human health and the environment, including the climate system;
- 1.6. Promote cost - benefit studies of atmospheric pollution and its impacts;
- 1.7. Promote epidemiological studies in the countries for appropriate decision making in each;
- 1.8. Align emission standards and regulations from point sources and areas to control and promote research on the effects of transboundary atmospheric pollutants;
- 1.9. Promote the development of local and regional laboratories specialized in the analysis of atmospheric pollutants;
- 1.10. Consider the growing interest in the role of short lived climate forcers and the option for short term climate change mitigation they offer, promote studies on short lived climate forcers (SLCF) and their mitigation options as part of general atmospheric pollution strategies;
- 1.11. Identify opportunities for enhanced international coordination and outreach on SLCF;
- 1.12. Raise public awareness of the problem and opportunity of addressing SLCF;
- 1.13. Identify knowledge gaps and capacity needs on SLCF;
- 1.14. Discuss common approaches to take new action or to promote and reinforce action in other organizations with regard to SLCF;
- 1.15. Promote regional initiatives and action plans to reduce SLCFs.

2. National and Regional Environmental Governance

- 2.1 Consider atmospheric pollution as an intrinsic component of national development plans and review necessary legislation in order to adjust it, as required;
- 2.2 Promote the coordination of the national authorities, institutes and agencies interested in the development and implementation of policies on atmospheric pollutants and management strategies;
- 2.3 Build and improve the capacity of atmospheric pollution management units in the national environmental agencies;
- 2.4 Develop and maintain, as appropriate, national emission inventories for the major air pollutants, including greenhouse gases and SLCFs (residential sector, agriculture and forestry, industrial processes, transport, fossil fuel extraction and processing, waste management etc.), and assess the impact of the various policies and measures related to these emissions;
- 2.5 Promote and install air quality monitoring stations for key pollutants using regionally standardized equipment and protocols and, as necessary, on a sub-regional level, linking this to the work being carried out globally with respect to modelling and forecasting with support of international cooperation agencies;
- 2.6 Identify and share best practices related to financing policies in order to implement measures to reduce atmospheric emissions including SLCFs and carry out evaluations using monitoring and emission inventory systems;
- 2.7 Facilitate the regional alignment of air quality standards and guidelines and carry out periodic revisions to evaluate the national and regional air quality standards, comparing them with the best international practices;
- 2.8 Promote the use of networks and the exchange of information with support from cooperation agencies (North-South, South-South);
- 2.9 Promote the assessment of the impacts of SLCF on national and regional climate patterns, human health, agriculture, ecosystems
- 2.10 Promote development of strategies and action plans for mitigating SLCF in key sectors of relevance to each country, including technological and economic assessment of options

3. Transport Sector

Standards for vehicles and equipment

- 3.1 For those countries where the import of used vehicles is permitted, promote the establishment of emissions control regulations (both conventional and greenhouse gas) and ensure that the condition of these vehicles does not pose a threat to human health and the environment, including emissions testing and maintenance regimes;

- 3.2 Establish pilot programmes, at the national level, to measure the emission of pollutants from vehicles in the major cities to be completed by a negotiated date;
- 3.3 Develop the necessary capacity to develop cost-effective inspection and maintenance programmes;
- 3.4 Establish maximum permissible emission levels of conventional and CO₂ at the regional, sub-regional and national level, such as PM 2.5 standards, by a negotiated date for the different categories of motor vehicles, to be as rigorous as the quality of the available fuel allows;
- 3.5 Explore and adopt policies and modern technologies that promote vehicle fuel efficiency and the reduction of emissions, for new vehicles and for those in circulation;
- 3.6 Promote and establish CO₂ and non-CO₂ emissions regulations for mobile sources.

Fuel standards

- 3.7 Promote the establishment and standardization of appropriate fuel specification regulations, aiming for a sulphur content not exceeding 50 ppm by a negotiated date, with a view to achieving ultra-low sulphur (15 ppm or less) by a negotiated date;
- 3.8 Establish new reference laboratories and reinforce and expand the capacity of the existing labs in order to analyze fuel quality;
- 3.9 Carry out detailed economic, social, and environmental evaluations to allow for the sustainable use of biofuels and other clean fuels.

4. Urban Planning and Management

Transportation Infrastructure and Urban Planning

- 4.1 Promote investments in the development of sustainable urban mobility infrastructure, especially for public transportation and non-motorised transport systems;
- 4.2 Promote the use of lanes or highways exclusively for public transportation and the provision of integrated facilities for non-motorised transport such as bikeways and sidewalks which can act as feeder systems;
- 4.3 Establish operating rules and maintenance standards for public transportation vehicles and for the provision of the service;
- 4.4 Promote the development and implementation of traffic management policies and travel demand management, particularly streamlining the use of private vehicles through measures such as charging tolls, fees for traffic congestion, and the administration of parking lots, while at the same time providing viable alternatives in public and non-motorised transport;
- 4.5 Promote the financial sustainability of improvements in public transportation and non-motorised transport, including incentives to

encourage usage of mass transit systems ;

- 4.6 Develop adequate information systems and awareness raising programme as a basis for urban planning, scenarios formulation and policy evaluation;
- 4.7 Develop and promote strategies to increase green areas, ecological measures in urban spaces and the paving of sidewalks and roads within urban planning and design;
- 4.8 Develop and apply, as appropriate, land use control instruments, such as urban planning regulations, to ensure the appropriate location of industrial establishments;
- 4.9 Promote the implementation of sustainable transport solutions, including the development of bus rapid transit (BRT), bus regulation and planning (BRP), and non-motorized transport (NMT) networks.

5. Point and area sources

- 5.1 Draft and adopt adequate policies and legal frameworks to promote the adoption of the best available technologies and the best environmental practices by a negotiated date;
- 5.2 Draft and adopt policies and legal frameworks to facilitate and promote the use of cleaner fuels and the efficient use of energy;
- 5.3 Require environmental impact evaluations and/or environmental audits, as the case may be, for businesses and activities having potential and real impacts on air quality;
- 5.4 Promote the establishment and/or adoption of emission standards and regulations for the different activities and ensure compliance with them;
- 5.5. Develop the capacity for the national monitoring of emissions caused by area and point sources.

6. Forest fires, Uncontrolled Burning, and Deforestation

- 6.1 Support research on the frequency and impact of forest fires in Latin America and the Caribbean, including the improvement of estimates on contribution to the emissions of black carbon as one of the major SLCFs;
- 6.2 Promote the development and strengthening of the population's capacity to prevent and control forest fires, both provoked by human beings and natural causes;
- 6.3 Develop and implement early warning systems for fires, such as fire management strategies;
- 6.4 Promote reforestation programmes in deteriorated landscapes and develop alternative livelihood programmes;
- 6.5 Enact regulations for the prohibition of outdoors waste burning;
- 6.6 Improve enforcement of existing regulations regarding open burning.

7. Indoor Air Pollution

- 7.1 Promote the use of accessible, cleaner (less emissions) and more efficient devices for clean combustion and safer energy as it contributes to reducing indoor air pollution;
- 7.2 Promote the use of cleaner and more advanced technologies and energy, including the use of renewable energy;
- 7.3 Support energy efficiency training programmes and promote public awareness of the impact of indoor air pollution;
- 7.4 Promote formulation of technical specifications for domestic combustion devices and establish emission, efficiency, and safety standards;
- 7.5 Promote and support the building of naturally ventilated houses;
- 7.6 Promote electrification of poor areas to avoid using fuel lamps;
- 7.7 Promote the substitution of conventional cookstoves with improved cookstoves;
- 7.8 Promote the establishment of standardised methodologies to analyze control parameters for sick building syndrome.

8. Public Participation in Atmospheric Pollution Management

- 8.1 Increase public awareness of atmospheric pollution problems through dissemination campaigns using formal and informal communication channels;
- 8.2 Improve participation of those interested in air quality management by supporting initiatives to build capacity in governments, academic institutions and civil society organizations;
- 8.3 Promote the active commitment of the civil society and other stakeholders in collaborative air quality management projects;
- 8.4 Promote the access to and exchange of information on air pollution including, among others, research and educational information;
- 8.5 Develop effective communication strategies on the impacts of atmospheric pollution on human health, climate change and the environment, aimed, for example, at school aged children;
- 8.6 Promote and support the development of citizen participation mechanisms.

9. Capacity Building and Research Development

- 9.1 Promote and establish regional education entities, identifying regional centres of excellence for researching atmospheric pollutants management and other related topics, integrating them into research networks;
- 9.2 Promote and support the development of training modules and student exchange programmes on atmospheric pollutants management and other

related topics;

- 9.3 Develop and adopt, as appropriate, methodologies to evaluate the impacts of atmospheric pollutants during the environmental impact evaluations, environmental audit studies, and socio-economic evaluations in collaboration with national and international academic institutions;
- 9.4 Promote and support initiatives to reduce atmospheric emissions on all scales in collaboration with regional and international organizations;
- 9.5 Foster and support the harmonized use of inventories, monitoring and modelling processes, impact evaluations, reduction options, and framework policy approach.

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