



AirQualityAsia

High-Level Strategy Session

US-Asia Institute, Washington D.C
20-21 April 2017

We, the participants of the AirQualityAsia High-Level Strategy Session:

Acknowledging that air quality represents serious health, economic, environmental and transboundary challenges,

Fully aware that rapid economic growth, while contributing to human-development and poverty eradication, poses new challenges and opportunities in transitioning to a low-carbon economy,

Understanding that the environmental impacts of poor air quality also represent major threats to public health and human security, especially in developing countries,

Cautioning that the drive towards economic development can lead to polluting industry and can carry immense health costs that can be counter-productive unless sufficient monitoring, emissions standards, enforcement and incentivizing measures incentivizing efficient and clean use of energy are in place to protect against air pollution and promote Sustainable Development Goals (SDG),

Recognizing that confronting the challenge of air pollution will require concerted and coordinated sub-national as well as regional responses,

Committed to substantially reducing, by 2030, the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous air pollutants and contamination (SDG 3.9),

Confirming the urgent need to improve monitoring of air pollution in South and Southeast Asia, especially for PM2.5,

Recognizing that many Asian countries are rapidly urbanizing, a phenomenon that places great stress on resources and produces immense environmental impacts,

Committed to reduce, by 2030, the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality, municipal and other waste management (SDG 11.6),



Reaffirming as agreed by our governments in SDG 3.9 that ensuring clean air quality can serve improvements in global public health as well as provide robust climate mitigation measures,

Accepting as agreed by our governments in SDG 11.6 that assessment of air quality is crucial in informing policy makers for adopting corrective measures,

Committed by our governments in SDG 12.4 to achieve, by 2020, the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life-cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment (SDG 12.4),

Acknowledging that States owe a special responsibility to one another to reduce or prevent sources of transboundary air pollution, and

Emphasizing that robust fiscal policies and incentives can lead industry investments in clean air technologies,

Agree to work within our respective Parliaments, Parliamentary Committees, civil society organizations and other regional and international fora in which we participate, to:

1. Enhance public awareness of the dangers and costs of air pollution to individuals, societies and public health systems, with a view to mobilizing public opinion in favour of cleaner air quality across Asia;
2. Establish air quality assessment mechanisms, including providing budget allocations for procurement, operation and maintenance of real-time air quality monitoring devices that comply with all the pollutants for which there are national, sub-national or WHO standards;
3. Identify major sources of air pollution through the establishment of stack emission monitoring and regular reporting of total sectoral emissions at the national and sub-national level;
4. Aim to start reducing pollution levels as soon as possible, agreeing to regional and national time-bound targets and action plans;
5. Work to establish comprehensive air pollution action plans that cover all major emitting sectors and regions, enabling the national or sub-national air quality targets to be met;
6. Support compliance incentives such as economic instruments and fiscal policies aimed to attain air quality goals;
7. Establish reporting of annual emissions of transboundary air pollutants, especially PM 2.5, SO₂, NO_x and mercury, and agree to target reductions in these emissions; and require transboundary impact assessments for projects with major air pollutant emissions;



8. Call for the prioritization of solutions to air pollution with the following climate change benefits:
 - a) Sustainable renewable energy,
 - b) Sustainable transport,
 - c) Prevention of crop and forest fires;
9. Review ambient air quality standards so as to align with the World Health Organization's health-based guidelines;
10. Revise air emission standards, especially for power plants and industrial sources, to require best available techniques to be used to control SO₂, NO_x, PM and mercury;
11. Provide budget allocation for the setup, operation and maintenance of air quality monitoring systems, quality assurance of data and communication of air quality data to the public;
12. Promote an accelerated shift to clean cooking, heating and lighting;
13. Continue with progressive tightening of vehicle emission and fuel quality standards, especially for ultra-low sulfur diesel;
14. Provide policies that incentivize more fuel efficient and less polluting vehicles, along with corresponding vehicle inspection and maintenance programs;
15. Encourage public-private collaboration towards making the freight transport sector more sustainable and with reduced emissions;
16. Encourage the deployment of electric vehicles (EVs) of all types and to develop and support policies that support the uptake of EVs such as those that reduce the cost gap between EVs and conventional vehicles and drive investments in charging infrastructure;
17. Provide mechanisms for effective collaboration and inter-agency coordination for air pollution management and control and enforcement especially among agencies whose main mandate is pollution regulation (i.e. environment ministries), those responsible for pollution sources (i.e. transport, energy and industry ministries), and those most affected (i.e. health ministries). Similar mechanisms for coordination between national agencies and sub-national agencies must be put in place as well;
18. Provide adequate financial and technical resources, and capacity development opportunities to strengthen air quality management and implementation of climate mitigation measures;
19. Prioritize policies and programs that promote the development of high-quality urban transportation systems and mid- to high-density urban development that is tied to the provision of public transport.