

Integrating efforts for control of air pollution and climate change

A TERI – UNEP India Event

ABSTRACT

Air pollutants are known to cause serious impacts over human health, agricultural productivity, buildings, ecology, and climate. In view of the problem of rapidly deteriorating air quality, India has taken a strong step forward by launching the National Clean Air Program (NCAP) for control of air pollution in India. The NCAP stresses upon stringent implementation of mitigation measures for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution; optimisation and updation of ambient air quality monitoring network across the country for ensuring comprehensive and reliable database, and enhancing public awareness and capacity building measures for inclusive public participation and for ensuring trained manpower and infrastructure on air pollution. The program targets a reduction of 20-30% in concentrations of particulate matter (PM) by 2024 with respect to concentrations in 2017. PM is composed several types of particles varying in their physical and chemical properties. Black carbon (BC), which is an important component of PM, is one of the known short lived climate pollutant (SLCP) along with others like methane, ozone and HFCs. The strategies listed in NCAP, along with reduction in overall PM reduction, can also lead to control of emissions of BC, methane, and precursors of ozone. Reductions in SLCPs can lead to significant benefits in terms of control over regional scale climate changes.

India has now joined the Climate & Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), and the NCAP strategies, through their SLCPs reduction potential, can show up as additional contributions of India towards controlling global warming. In view of this, the NCAP need to be continually strengthened for effective, widespread and timely control of air pollutants along with the SLCPs. NCAP can become not only a tool to enhance competitiveness of the Indian cities to achieve air quality standards, but also an instrument for India to lead the world on SLCPs mitigation. There is a need to integrate efforts in order to showcase progress on both the fronts of air quality and climate change. There is also a need to understand the mechanisms followed internationally for integrating these efforts and multiply the benefits. Integration of efforts can lead to enhanced budgetary allocations, and fund leveraging for appropriate implementation of prescribed measures in the NCAP. There is also a need for capacity building for better understanding of air pollution and climate linkages. Indigenous research needs to be commissioned to establish these linkages and also for identifying key strategies which can provide significant benefits on both the sides. This will also call for coordination between different levels (vertical and horizontal) of the government to understand the efforts required and the related benefits spanning over widespread scales. This side-event will discuss India's efforts for air pollution control, which also provide co-benefits of reducing SLCPs and regional scale climate change. The event will invite representatives from the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (GoI), CCAC, TERI, IIASA, and EPA to deliberate on integration of the efforts for controls on the two linked issues.

Key points of discussions will be:

- 1) What are India's key initiatives for air quality improvement?
- 2) How to strengthen the National Clean Air Programme of India?
- 3) What are the benefits of integrating climate and air quality policies?
- 4) How learnings from rest of the world can be put to use in India?
- 5) What could be the mechanisms to integrate action on climate and air quality fronts?

S.No.	Proposed Participant	Thematic area and topic covered
1	Mr. Ravi Shankar Prasad AS, MoEFCC/Ms. Nidhi Khare, JS, MoEFCC, Govt. of India	India's efforts for air pollution control -NCAP initiatives
2	Nathan Borgford-Parnell CCAC	SLCPs - Science and policy dimensions
3	World Bank	Asian experience on air pollution control
4	EPA/CARB/Max Plank Institute	US/European experience on air pollution control
5	Dr. Sumit Sharma TERI	Existing research and policy dimensions on air pollution control in India
6.	Tiy Chung, UNEP	Integrating efforts for air pollution and climate change control