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## **New Climate and Clean Air Coalition Expands to 13 Members**

### **New Initiatives Assessed for Fast and Scaled-up Action on Black Carbon, Methane, and HFCs**

**Stockholm, 24 April 2012**—Five transformational initiatives aimed at accelerating and scaling-up action against a range of health, crop and climate-damaging pollutants were given the go-ahead by Ministers meeting in the Swedish capital Stockholm.

The initiatives, which mark the beginning of the implementation phase of the new Climate and Clean Air Coalition, will fast track momentum towards reducing black carbon or 'soot', methane and a range of fluorinated gases called HFCs.

Further momentum was catalyzed with the announcements of Colombia, Japan, Nigeria, Norway and the European Commission that they are joining the Coalition along with the World Bank.

It brings to 13 the number of partners who have joined, expanding the initial membership founded by Bangladesh, Canada, Ghana, Mexico, Sweden and the United States and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

The Coalition was launched at an event in Washington DC on February 16 at an event hosted by US Secretary State Hillary Clinton.

Five other countries—Australia, Denmark, Finland, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom along with delegates from the private sector —also attended as observers at this week's meeting to learn first-hand the Coalition's plans.

More than 10 years of scientific research and assessment indicates that substances such as black carbon or 'soot' and methane are triggering wide-ranging health, climate and crop-damaging impacts.

Introducing cost effective and environmentally-friendly alternatives to fluorinated gases known as HFCs are also part of the Coalition's aims as a result of their high potential to impact climate change if widely taken up over the coming years.

Fast action to reduce short lived climate pollutants can have a direct impact on climate change with the potential to reduce warming by up to 0.5 degrees C by 2050 and help keep global temperature increases below 2 degrees C

Reductions of SLCPs would also allow for addressing rapid melting in the Arctic and in mountain regions with glaciers, like the Himalayas.

By around 2030, fast action can potentially prevent millions of premature deaths from for example inhalation of black carbon while avoiding an estimated 30 million tonnes of crop losses.

The Coalition emphasizes that the climate benefits need to be backed by cuts in other greenhouse gases including CO<sub>2</sub> if temperature increases over the 21<sup>st</sup> century are to be held below 2 degrees C.

However, addressing near term warming from SLCPs may be crucial to avoid the most serious impacts over the coming decades.

The announcement of new national partners was made today at the end of the first Ministerial meeting of the Coalition which has been taking place in parallel with Stockholm+40—a conference marking four decades after the UN Conference on the Human Environment which took place in the Swedish capital in 1972.

The meeting and conference also comes in advance of Rio+20—two decades after the 1992 Earth Summit that set the course for contemporary sustainable development.

Lena Ek, the Swedish Environment Minister, said today: “Sweden is committed to continue working actively with this important coalition. Furthermore we are happy to announce our contribution to the Coalition Trust Fund with 1.4 MSEK for the UNEP Secretariat and 10 MSEK to concrete projects”.

11.4 million Swedish Krona is around \$1.7 million.

### **Assessment and Go-Ahead for Scaled-up Initiatives**

The meeting assessed around a dozen initiatives proposed by developed and developing countries for fast and federated action on short lived climate pollutants including many happening already at the national level.

Delegates took forward five to be approved for rapid implementation by Ministers on the final day. Those approved included:-

- Fast action on diesel emissions including from heavy duty vehicles and engines

Studies show that reductions are possible by addressing emissions from the freight transportation supply chain, through city action plans, and adoption of a range of measures for reducing sulphur in fuels and vehicle emissions

- Upgrading old inefficient brick kilns which are a significant source of black carbon emissions

Mexico has for example [20,000] small and medium-sized brick kilns and the design of many of the [6,000] in Bangladesh hark back to the 1900s.

- Accelerating the reduction of methane emissions from landfills

World-wide the waste management sector contributes about 11% of global methane emissions, and the coalition will work with cities to reduce methane emissions from landfills by improving strategic municipal solid waste planning and providing technical assistance.

- Speeding up cuts in methane and other emissions from the oil and gas industry

Natural gas venting and leakage from the oil and gas industry accounts for over one fifth of global man-made emissions of methane: Flaring at oil installations generate both methane and black carbon emissions. An estimated one third of leaks and venting can be cut using existing technologies at low cost.

- Accelerating alternatives to HFCs

HFCs are being rapidly introduced as replacements to chemicals that can damage the ozone layer—the Earth’s protective shield that filters out hazardous ultra violet light. But HFCs are also powerful greenhouse gases.

The Coalition aims to fast track more environmentally-friendly and cost effective alternatives and technologies to avoid HFC growth.

- Additional initiatives – including a proposal by Ghana on agricultural/forest open burning and a proposal by Bangladesh on cookstoves – would be further developed over the coming weeks.

### **Trust Fund Established**

To support the Coalition’s efforts, a new Trust Fund managed by a UNEP-hosted secretariat was agreed today.

Initial financing pledges for the Coalition now amount to some \$16.7 million with significantly more funds expected over the coming 12 months.

### **Science Advisory Panel**

Sound science has underpinned the formation of the Coalition and will guide its work into the future. Ministers today asked three luminaries involved in short lived climate pollutant work to advise them on the formation of a dedicated world-class Science Advisory Panel to provide scientific advice to the Coalition.

The advice will be provided by Drew Shindell of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, Mario Molina, the distinguished Mexican chemist and 1995 Nobel Prize co-winner and **Veerabhadran Ramanathan**, chair of the UNEP Atmospheric Brown Cloud project based at the University of California San Diego,

### **Coalition Web Site Goes Live**

The Coalition today also unveiled a dedicated web site to support dissemination of information about the initiative's role and partners <http://www.unep.org/ccac/>

### **Notes to Editors**

#### **Quotes from Other Newly Joining Partners**

##### **Colombia**

##### **Frank Pearl, the Colombian Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development, said:"**

"Colombia has recognized for some time the urgency of acting on these short lived climate pollutants including the impacts of black carbon on public health and the accelerated melting of glaciers the high mountain areas of Latin America".

"Colombia is among several countries in our region to act on soot particles from vehicles and other contaminating sources as well as emissions that are triggering tropospheric or ground level ozone—another short lived climate pollutants," he said.

"In joining the Coalition we see not only potential national and global benefits but Colombia plans to act as a regional hub, reaching out to other countries in Latin America in order to generate regional opportunities for sustainable development," said Mr Pearl.

##### **European Commission**

Connie Hedegaard, European Commissioner for Climate Action, said: "The European Commission is very pleased to join this Coalition. This initiative should complement the efforts needed under the UN climate change convention to cut global greenhouse gas emissions to a level that will limit global temperature increase to below 2°C.

"The Commission is willing to consider further support to concrete projects in developing countries to reduce emissions from short-lived climate pollutants. Action on these pollutants

will not, however, replace the need for continued action by all major economies to reduce CO2 emissions, which needs to be stepped up," she added.

## **Nigeria**

Mrs Hadiza Ibrahim Mailafia , Nigerian Minister of the Environment said: "Nigeria is delighted to be a new member of the Coalition. It is estimated that 95,000 women in my country die each year prematurely because of black carbon emissions from source such as inefficient cook stoves--this is a conservative estimate. Meanwhile there are enormous opportunities for reducing methane emissions from sources such as the oil and gas industry and landfills that can benefit Nigeria and its people and the wider regional and global ambitions to combat climate change in a cost effective and economic way".

"We look to encourage more countries within Africa and beyond to join this inspiring initiative so that fast action can be federated everywhere in order to save lives, improve food security and tackle climate change which challenges the future of the poor and the vulnerable exponentially," she added.

## **Norway**

Bård Vegar Solhjell, the Norwegian Minister of the Environment, said: "Norway is delighted to join the Coalition. It unites our country's interest in achieving national sustainability with international responsibilities in the areas of health, food security, climate and development".

"There are many international initiatives addressing these short term pollutants, and Norway is participating in several of them. In this Coalition the United Nations Environment Program participates, both as partner and as Secretariat for the Coalition. This is a very wise decision, which provides credibility and leverage and increases the value of the Coalition's work", he added.

"Finally it echoes to Norway's interest in the Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication—a key issue for the upcoming Rio+20 Summit in June—in which well-targeted policy and financial interventions can catalyze benefits across multiple fronts," said Mr Solhjell.

## **World Bank**

"From multi-billion dollar investments in clean energy each year to climate smart solutions for agriculture and cities, the Bank already targets short-term environmental pollutants in developing countries through our lending, data and evidence based knowledge sharing and

technical assistance. But, we can achieve even more by working as a coalition," said Rachel Kyte, World Bank Vice President for Sustainable Development.

"This is the most important decade for action on climate change", Kyte said. "But with a global treaty that will speed the curbing of carbon dioxide many years off, the climate and clean air coalition puts a practical new deal on the table - one that helps slow global warming while reducing the soot and smog that is damaging food crops and health worldwide, undermining growth and development."

### **Aims of the Coalition**

- To catalyze the speed and the scale of action on short lived climate pollutants
- Enhance existing and develop new national actions to address mitigation gaps
- Encourage existing and new regional actions
- Reinforce and track existing efforts to reduce these pollutants, promoting opportunities for greater international coordination and developing and improving inventories
- Identify barriers to action and seeking to surmount them
- Promote best practices or available technologies and showcase successful efforts to address short lived climate pollutants
- Improve understanding of and review scientific progress on short lived climate pollutants, their impacts and benefits of mitigation and dissemination of knowledge; and
- Mobilize targeted support for those developing countries that require resources to develop their capacity and to implement actions consistent with national strategies to support sustainable development

The Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-Term Climate Pollutants was launched in Washington DC on 17 February 2012.

[http://www.unep.org/dewa/Portals/67/pdf/HFC\\_report.pdf](http://www.unep.org/dewa/Portals/67/pdf/HFC_report.pdf)

[http://www.unep.org/dewa/Portals/67/pdf/Black\\_Carbon.pdf](http://www.unep.org/dewa/Portals/67/pdf/Black_Carbon.pdf)

<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/335/6065/183>

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