

SIDE EVENT: Climate and Clean Air Benefits: Actions for Controlling Short-Lived Climate Pollutants

DATE: 20 February 2012

TIME: 1.45 p.m. to 2.45 p.m.

VENUE: Conference Room 13

Purpose/objective:

Short-Lived Climate Pollutants, including methane, black carbon, tropospheric ozone and many HFCs, are responsible for a substantial fraction of global warming and some of them have additional significant air quality concerns, with detrimental health and environmental impacts and negative consequences on development. Recognizing that mitigation of the impacts of these pollutants is critical in the near term, a number of countries have come together to address the issue in a coordinated manner. The side event aims to inform about these impacts and to raise awareness on available action and ongoing initiatives to control Short-Lived Climate Pollutants.

Programme:

Chair: Prof. Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director, Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies and former Executive Director of UNEP

1.45 p.m. – 1.55 p.m. **The Scientific Case for Fast Action for Near-Term Climate Protection and Clear Air Benefits**

Prof. Joseph Alcamo, Chief Scientist, UNEP

Short-Lived Climate Forcers (SLCFs) or pollutants, including methane, black carbon, tropospheric ozone and many HFCs are responsible for a substantial fraction of global warming. Some of them have additional significant air quality concerns, with detrimental health and environmental impacts. Reducing SLCFs will protect human health and the environment, improve air quality and slow the rate of climate change within the first half of this Century.

UNEP has recently released a Synthesis Report on “Near Term Climate Protection and Clean Air Benefits: Actions for Controlling Short-Lived Climate Forcers”, which highlights the costs and benefits and policy avenues for introducing a package of measures that - if deployed widely- have the potential to result in immediate and multiple benefits for the environment, health, food security and development, as well as near term climate protection. UNEP has also recently released a Synthesis Report on “HFCs: A Critical Link in Protecting Climate and the Ozone Layer” which highlights the potential great impact of HFCs, increasingly used as alternatives to ozone-depleting substances, on climate change. The Report shows that the projected growth in emissions of HFCs can be controlled if urgent action is taken.

1.55 p.m. – 2.05 p.m. **Introducing the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants**

H.E. Dr. Mohammed Hasan Mahmud, Minister of Environment and Forests,
Bangladesh

Recognizing that mitigation of the impacts of Short-Lived Climate Pollutants is critical in the near term, a number of countries have come together to address the issue in a coordinated manner. The Partnership seeks to enhance action to reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants by: raising awareness of Short-Lived Climate Pollutants impacts and mitigation strategies; enhancing and developing new national and regional actions, including by identifying and overcoming barriers, enhancing capacity and mobilizing support; promoting best practices and showcasing successful efforts, and; improving scientific understanding on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants impacts and mitigation strategies. The session will outline progress of the Coalition to date and discuss options for its development and expansion.

2.05 p.m. – 2.15 p.m. **Stockholm+40 and Near-Term Climate Protection and Clean Air Benefits**

H.E. Ms. Lena Ek, the Minister of Environment of Sweden

In commemoration of the UN Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm in 1972, the Stockholm +40 Partnership Forum for Sustainable Development will be held in Stockholm from 23 to 25 April 2011. Stockholm+40 aims to foster innovative ideas and creative processes to create a platform for dialogue on sustainable innovations, sustainable production and sustainable lifestyles. Stockholm+40 also represents one of the early milestones for the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to reduce Short-lived Climate Pollutants: the first meeting of the Partnership will be held on 23-24 April, with both Ministerial and Working Group sessions. In addition a major scientific seminar on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants will be held during these days. The plans for Stockholm+40 focusing on the Short-Lived Climate Pollutants events will be presented.

2.15 p.m. – 2.45 p.m. **High-Level Dialogue: Immediate Steps to Ensure Fast Action for Near-Term Climate Protection and Clean Air Benefits**

H.E. Dr. Mohammed Hasan Mahmud, Minister of Environment and Forests,
Bangladesh

H.E. Ms. Lena EK, Minister of the Environment, Sweden

Mr. Dan McDougall, Environment Canada, International Affairs Branch, Assistant
Deputy Minister, Canada

Representative of Ghana (tbc)

Mr. Santiago Lorenzo Alonso, Deputy Director General for Multilateral
Environmental Agreements, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources,
Mexico

Dr. Kerri-Ann Jones, Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International
Environmental and Scientific Affairs, United States of America

This Dialogue will focus on immediate and concrete steps to ensure fast action for near-term climate protection and clean air benefits by reducing short-lived climate pollutants, in the context of existing initiatives and in view of Rio+20. This session will also allow for interaction with the audience.

For more details please contact:

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