

**Ministerial Meeting on Short Lived Climate Forcers
Near Term Climate and Air Quality Benefits
*Mexico City, 12 September 2011***

Co-Chairs' Summary

Ministers and high level representatives from 23 countries and the United Nations Environment Program met in Mexico City on September the 12th to participate in the Ministerial Meeting on Short Lived Climate Forcers-Near Term Climate and Air Quality Benefits, hosted jointly by the Governments of Mexico and Sweden, with the support of the United Nations Environment Program, and the Governments of the United States and Canada.

Participants had a fruitful discussion focusing on the role that short lived climate forcers (SLCFs) can play in providing protection for air quality, human health, climate change, ecosystem, and agriculture; the regional impacts and actions currently undertaken on SLCF; means of implementation to unleash their mitigation potential, and views on the way forward.

The Meeting Co-Chairs, Minister Juan Elvira and Minister Andreas Carlgren, stressed in their opening statements the importance of taking action on SLCF, as agents whose reduction can help addressing climate and air quality challenges, delivering as well social and economic co-benefits.

Urgency of Addressing Short Lived Climate Forcers

Participants emphasized the compelling rationale for action on SLCF noting they comprise 30-40% of current warming with some components growing rapidly. Because SLCFs are a large fraction of current warming they present an enormous near term mitigation opportunity. Presenters informed on recent scientific findings on SLCF that reveal their potential by reducing emissions of black carbon and methane to:

- Slow the rate of climate change within the first half of this century, with a possibility to reduce projected temperature increase by 0.5 °C globally by 2040 and by 0.7 degrees in the Arctic, helping to avoid climate “tipping points” and slowing down sea level rise;
- Provide significant public health benefits, avoiding 2.4 million premature deaths per year;
- Prevent the loss of 52 million tons annually of the global production of basic grains (1-4 percent of the global production).

It was noted that so far there is no high level political forum that addresses SLCF collectively or systemically. Information on SLCF action oriented studies under development was provided and welcomed by participants.

Information was shared on recent events on SLCF, including the technical Workshop on Science and Policy of Short Lived Climate Forcers, held in Mexico City on September 9-10, where the importance of achieving air quality improvements and regional collaboration were highlighted;

and the brainstorming session on Short Lived Climate Forcers, celebrated in Washington DC, in August 28-29. These events provided inputs for the Ministerial discussion and are part of a suite of efforts, including a Swedish –Bangladesh Seminar in Dhaka in mid-October 2011, to raise awareness and promote actions on SLCF.

Regional actions on Short Lived Climate Forcers

Participants discussed the regional aspects of SLCF both in terms of measures to reduce emissions of SLCF and near-term climate and air quality benefits and in terms of developing suitable regional solutions and frameworks to address them. Specific examples of actions in sensitive regions such as the Arctic and South East Asia were presented, underscoring the need for urgent actions.

The implementation of actions on black carbon was also presented in the frame of the UN-ECE Convention on Long range Transboundary Air Pollution, the only legally binding air pollution agreement to address SLCF.

Discussions touched upon regional and sectoral impacts, including those in the agricultural sector and food security, underscoring the need to address SLCF also as a development issue.

Although it was recognized that actions to reduce emissions of SLCF would have to be taken at the national level, it was also noted that regional approaches to address SLCF are both needed and feasible, in order to improve and share knowledge; increase understanding of regionally specific mitigation potentials; and explore the use of existing regional cooperative frameworks, amongst others. It is also important to mobilize support from international organizations, not least the UN system.

Means of implementation and financing

Information on relevant initiatives was presented, including the Prototype Methane Financing Facility; the Global Methane Initiative; black carbon and HFC's initiatives all of which have potential for SLCF mitigation.

It was observed that information and knowledge on SLCF already exists, and that many initiatives and forums address SLCF to various extents. Participants generally recognized the need to scale up the implementation of actions to fully reap the climate, air quality, energy efficiency and social benefits of reducing these substances.

There was general concurrence on the need for effective means to enable implementation of actions on SLCF, through technology dissemination and transfer, the development of adequate financial instruments, and increased international collaboration in the field. The importance of supporting ongoing regional and financial initiatives was stressed. The need for capacity building for the implementation of actions was pointed out as crucial in order to realize the global potential of reducing SLCF.

The way forward

During the discussions readiness and broad willingness were expressed to move forward to take actions on SLCF and continue discussions and work in this area at different levels. There was also clear recognition of the key role and expertise offered by UNEP. The need for awareness raising and outreach activities to broaden the efforts to reduce emissions of SLFC was highlighted.

Strong support was expressed during the meeting for a strengthened concerted approach that would support national and regional measures in the form of an action oriented initiative at global level. It was further stressed that any future initiative would need to consider existing work in the field, and it was particularly stressed that action on SLCF should be complimentary to efforts under the UNFCCC, particularly long term CO2 mitigation. Participants noted the importance of including the private sector and civil society. Given the need to address SLCF, participants agreed to develop an inclusive and voluntary global initiative to increase the political awareness and support future cooperation for action on SLCF.