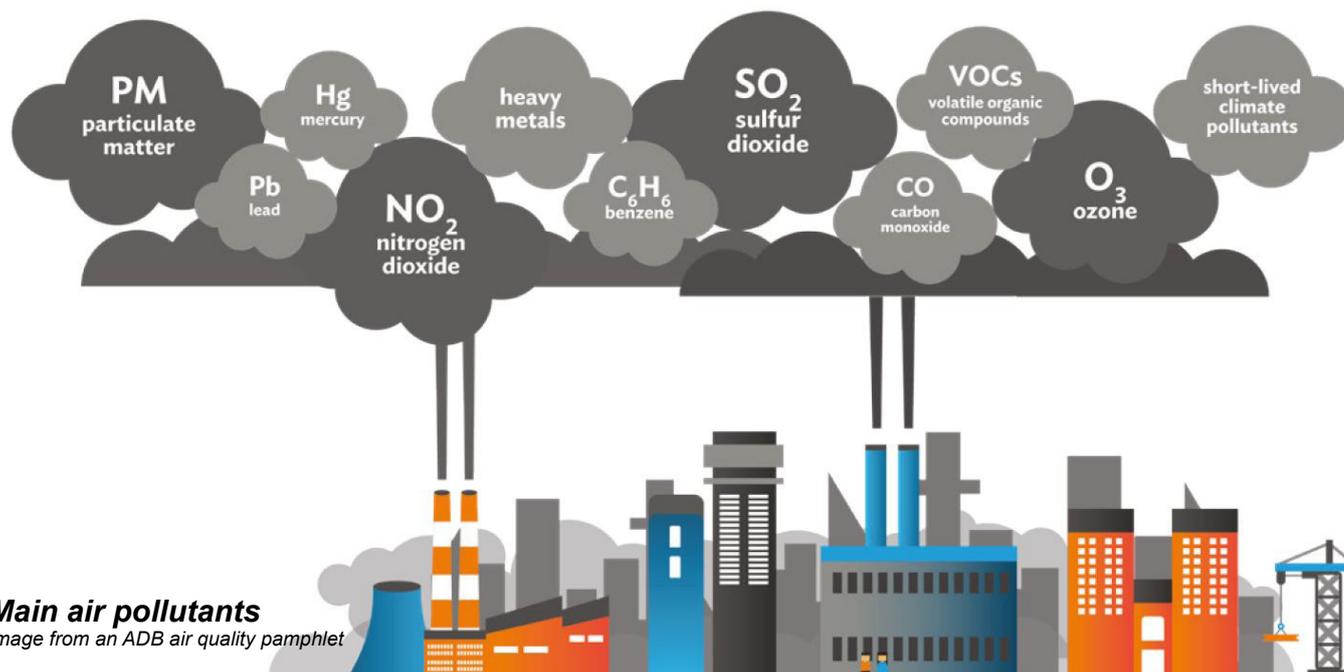


## Workshop on Scaling Up ADB's Support for Air Quality Management



### Main air pollutants

Image from an ADB air quality pamphlet

#### EVENT DETAILS

### Workshop on Scaling Up ADB's Support for Air Quality Management

Organized by Environment Thematic Group in partnership with Urban Sector Group, Health Sector Group, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Group and Transport Sector Group

23-24 November 2020 via Zoom

#### Remarks

- **Robert Guild**, Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department (SDCC), ADB
- **Manoj Sharma**, Urban Sector Group, ADB
- **Yasmin Siddiqi**, Central and West Asia Department (CWRD), ADB

#### Panelists (Day 1)

- **Kakuko Yoshida**, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Asia and the Pacific Office
- **Helena Molin Valdes**, Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) Secretariat
- **Lesley Onyon**, World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office New Delhi
- **Karin Shepardson**, the World Bank's Environment and Natural Resources and Blue Economy Practice
- **Robert Adamczyk**, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
- **Annabelle Giorgetti**, East Asia Regional Department, ADB

#### Discussion Leaders (Day 2)

- **Ravi Pervi**, South Asia Department, ADB
- **Neeta Pokhrel**, South Asia Urban and Water Division (SAUW), ADB
- **Priyantha Wijayatunga**, South Asia Energy Division (SAEN), ADB

#### Moderators

- **Bruce Dunn**, Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department Safeguards Division (SDSS), ADB
- **Karma Yangzom**, SDCC, ADB

### SCALING UP AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT THROUGH STRENGTHENED COLLABORATION

**92% of Asia and the Pacific population – about 4 billion people – are exposed to unhealthy levels of air pollution. – UNEP**

Air pollution is the leading environmental threat to public health today, causing 7 million deaths globally each year. At least 68% of these deaths were in Asia in 2019. Air pollution has high economic, health and social costs. Addressing the issue remains a challenge mainly due to the complex nature of the problem – cross-sectoral and cross-boundary.

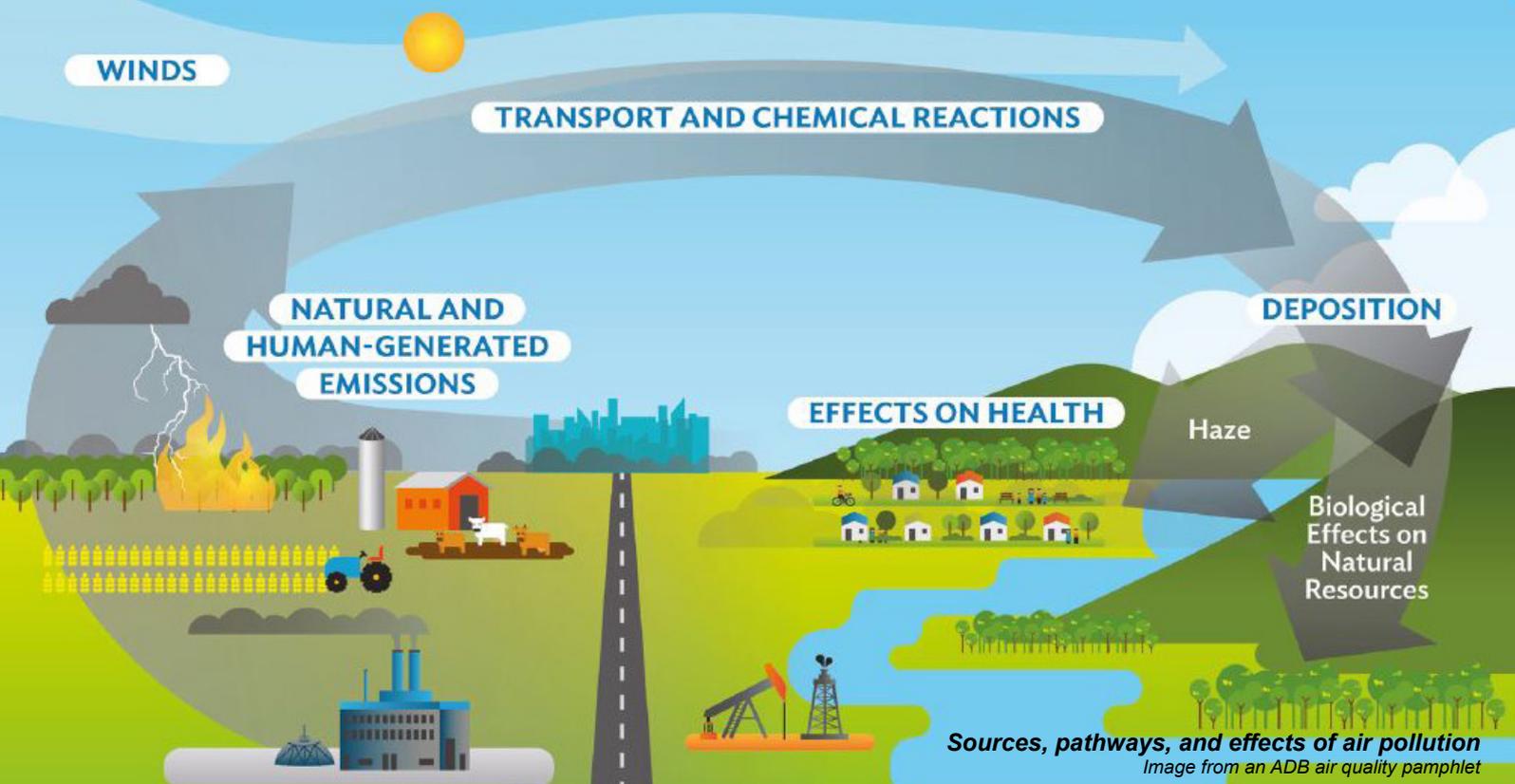
Since 2015, ADB has invested about \$2.5 billion in projects with air quality improvement as the main objective. This has been mainly focused on investments in East Asia, and a regional technical assistance promoting low carbon development in the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) region.

Given the complexity of the problem, there is a need for stronger collaboration across sectoral and thematic groups, and operations departments within ADB; as well as broader partnerships with other international organizations to scale up interventions.

A virtual workshop was held to initiate the process of developing a corporate level air quality program called "Asia Clean Blue Sky Program" with support from [RETA 9608 REG: Strengthening Knowledge and Actions for Air Quality Improvement](#) currently being implemented by the Sustainable Development and Climate Change Department (SDCC).

Key global and regional actors such as UNEP, CCAC, WHO, EBRD, and World Bank presented their strategy and experiences on addressing air pollution in Asia during the first day of the workshop. There is a need to rethink ADB's city-based approach to air quality management and shift to an airshed management approach to respond to the transboundary nature of air pollution.

The second day was an internal brainstorming exercise amongst ADB staff, especially from the operations departments, where they discussed ways on scaling up ADB's support for air quality management in Asia.



## URBAN CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE LESSONS

*DMCs face challenges on their institutional and governance structures. But internally, we also have to lower our silos. What can we do to promote dialogue?* – Sunghoon Kris Moon, USG

- Most air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions come from the same sources. Catalyzing actions on curbing short-lived climate pollutants, such as black carbon, methane, tropospheric ozone, and hydrofluorocarbons, could both provide local benefits to people's health and well-being while helping to progress long-term climate and sustainable agenda.
- Household air pollution remains one of the significant policy areas in Asia which needs to be addressed. Many countries in the region face limited reduction in use of solid fuels over the last two decades. Women, children, and the poor are most at risk to household air pollution.
- There is a need to standardize and improve quantification of co-benefits of addressing air pollution including climate change mitigation, health, social and gender benefits. This would help projects with air quality improvement goals to build a stronger case for funding and investment.
- Addressing air pollution requires an integrated, multi-sector, and multi-jurisdictional approach. An 'airshed' management approach responds to the transboundary nature of air pollution, requiring multi-stakeholder collaboration.
- Countries and cities need to own solutions within the local context. To come up with good solutions, source analysis and scientific-based planning are needed.
- Seizing the opportunity to integrate an air pollution agenda in programs to build back better is an important task. Within ADB, sustaining momentum to promote non-motorized transport; and restoring confidence on mass transportation such as transits could be enhanced.
- To scale up support for air pollution management in ADB, there is a need for stronger policy dialogues with developing member countries; to identify a clear platform and resources within the bank to advance discourse and actions; strengthen collaboration across sectors, themes, and operations department; and enhance partnerships with other external organizations with robust experience on the issue.

UCCRTF contributes \$1.2 million financing for RETA 9608 which is expected to deliver (i) an assessment of air quality situation and management practice; (ii) an evaluation of innovative cost-effective technological and policy options; and (iii) the development of City Level Clean Air Action Plans (CAAPs) along with investment estimates for air pollution control in 7 cities in 5 ADB DMCs.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

- **Karma Yangzom**, Principal Environment Specialist, SDCC | Email: [kyangzom@adb.org](mailto:kyangzom@adb.org)
- **UNEP report on Air Pollution in Asia and the Pacific: Science-based Solutions** outlines 24 policy areas that could achieve safe air quality levels for 1 billion people by 2030.

### UCCRTF FINANCING PARTNERS

