

MALDIVES PARTICIPATES IN THE REGIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONSULTATION ON NEAR-TERM CLIMATE PROTECTION AND CLEAN AIR BENEFITS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The Regional Intergovernmental Consultation on Near-term Climate Protection and Clean Air Benefits in Asia and the Pacific (CCAC) was held in Bangkok on 4-5 Feb 2013.

Hosted by Bangladesh, Japan and UNEP the meeting aims at looking ways to catalyse fast action to reduce the impacts of short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) in the Asia Pacific region.

SLCPs, such as black carbon or soot, methane, tropospheric ozone and some hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), are responsible for a substantial fraction short term warming, with various detrimental impacts on human health, agriculture and ecosystems.

Governments and officials from 19 Asian countries discussed existing measures that can be quickly taken up and integrated into strategies for economic development and environmental protection. This is the first time that the impacts of SLCP has been discussed at a regional level.

Deputy Minister Mr. Ahmed Musthafa Mohamed joined Bangladesh Minister of Environment and Forests, the Japanese Vice-Minister for Global Environmental Affairs and the Regional Director Dr. Park in the opening ceremony.

The two day meeting includes discussions on various mitigation options and reduction potential in Asia and the Pacific relating to the SLCPs such as black carbon, Methane, and non-methane ozone precursors and HFCs; in different sectors such as transport, solid waste and wastewater, agricultural sector, etc.

The session on HFCS: opportunities and options for mitigation was chaired by the Permanent Secretary Mr. Ahmed Saleem. He stressed the importance of receiving assistance through CCAC for the interested countries for a phase-down of HFCs which has been in the discussion table among the member Parties of the Montreal Protocol for the past four years.

While providing country specific information on issues related to HFCs, he highlighted the increase in the use of HFCs due to the control of HCFC usage and that fast actions and programmes are required to achieve the dual targets;- phase-out of HCFCs and to become carbon neutral by 2020.

The SLCP consultation meeting was attended by 28 partner countries and many intergovernmental organizations, representatives of the civil society and the private sector that is spearheading global efforts on SLCPs.

Maldives joined the CCAC in December 2012.

The two day meeting was held back to back with the Fourth Governmental Meeting on Urban Air Quality in Asia. Urban Air Quality in Asia meetings are held every two years and organized by Clean Air Asia and UNEP to update governments on developments of urban air quality management internationally and in the region and to harmonize approaches between Asian countries in tackling urban air pollution, including that caused by some SLCPs, and related areas such as climate change.