

XX Meeting of the Forum of the Ministries of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean

28th – 31st March 2016, Cartagena, Colombia

Draft Decision 9

TOWARDS THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION

Conscious that atmospheric pollution is a serious threat to public health, quality of life and ecosystem integrity and exacerbates local, regional, and global climate change;

Recognising that poor air quality and the related high human health and environmental costs is a significant impediment to the sustainable development of the countries of the region;

Noting that reducing air pollution goes hand in hand with reducing climate emissions, both short-lived and long-lived climate pollutants, and can support the achievement of climate mitigation and adaptation goals and commitments.

Acknowledging that many countries committed voluntarily to reduce emissions of atmospheric pollutants and their precursors to reduce air pollution and achieve climate management in synergy with sustainable development and public health objectives reflected in the Regional Plan of Action on Atmospheric Pollution simultaneously.

Reaffirming that fast action to improve air quality is fundamental to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and will directly contribute to the achievement of the targets under the SDGs on health, climate change, energy, food security, biodiversity and sustainable cities.

Recalling Decision 8 of the XIX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Los Cabos, Mexico in 2014, by which the Regional Plan of Action on Atmospheric Pollution was adopted as a voluntary guide for the development of national action plans appropriate to the particularities of each country with emphasis on technical exchange, capacity building and alternative techniques and technologies to reduce air pollution;

Acknowledging the efforts that the countries of the region have made in the development of their national implementation plans or national strategies on air quality, guided by the Regional Plan of Action on Atmospheric Pollution;

Recalling Resolution 1/7 on *Strengthening the function of UNEP in promoting air quality*, adopted at the First Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) held in

Nairobi, Kenya in June 2014, as a call to Governments to take action against air pollution and a request to UNEP to support this process;

Bearing in mind that the Regional Plan of Action on Atmospheric Pollution is to be updated every four years, and that the next review is scheduled for 2018;

THE MINISTERS OF ENVIRONMENT OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN DECIDE

1. To recognise with appreciation the intersessional work undertaken by the experts of the Regional Network on Atmospheric Pollution, with the support of the Secretariat, towards strengthening regional and national capacity to implement policies to improve air quality, through regional cooperation and the exchange of information and experiences.

2. Recognise the ongoing efforts to finalise the *Integrated Assessment of Short-Lived Climate Pollutants in Latin America and the Caribbean* document.

3. To make strategic use of information gathered in different upcoming reports and develop an effective outreach strategy, including: a) the Integrated Assessment on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants in Latin America and the Caribbean; b) the upcoming UNEP report on Air Quality efforts made by governments as per Resolution UNEA 1/7 and; c) the GEO LAC and GEO 6 reports, amongst others.

4. To encourage governments to develop mechanisms or processes at the regional, national and local levels to make air quality data easily accessible and understandable to the general public.

5. To foster collaboration and coordination at regional and national levels towards the implementation of national policies and programmes to significantly improve air quality and protect public health and the environment, also promoting joint efforts within the framework of the Intergovernmental Regional Network on Atmospheric Pollution.

6. Reinforce South-South cooperation on matters related to air quality with a view to those more developed States in the region transferring capacity and knowledge so that the remaining States can implement effective norms and mechanisms to control and monitor air quality.

7. To promote, as appropriate, synergies amongst the different initiatives addressing air quality and climate change mitigation and adaptation and to align them with the Regional Intergovernmental Network on Atmospheric Pollution adopted by the Forum of Ministers in its XIX meeting, with the objective of avoiding the duplication of efforts.

8. To promote the use of modelling-based on meteorological data, information on air quality sourced from existing monitoring networks to improve the identification of pollution sources and transport between regions aimed at the interface between science and technology for decision making and the implementation of policies, strategies and measures to control and reduce atmospheric pollution.

9. To promote the use of cleaner technologies as a way to reduce emissions of atmospheric pollutants.

10. To request the Steering Committee of the Intergovernmental Regional Network on Atmospheric Pollution to develop its workplan for the period 2016-2018, as well as identify and mobilise resources from international and national sources, as necessary, for the successful implementation of the Regional Plan of Action on Atmospheric Pollution, with the support of the Secretariat and the agencies of the Interagency Technical Committee, as well as the World Health Organisation and the Pan American Health Organisation.

11. To call upon the Green Climate Fund, the Global Environment Facility, the Special Climate Change Fund and other relevant financial institutions to prioritise fast action measures that simultaneously support reductions in atmospheric pollution while providing short-term benefits for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

12. To request the Chair of the XX Meeting of the Forum of Ministers to communicate this decision to the Second Session of UNEA and to all relevant actors included in the resolution.