

A young boy wearing a grey face mask and a green shirt is riding a red tricycle on a paved street. The background is hazy, showing a person on a motorcycle and a yellow taxi. The text is overlaid in blue and white.

UNEP's AIR QUALITY PROGRAMME: PROVIDING SUPPORT TO COUNTRIES AND CITIES IN IMPROVING AIR QUALITY

International Day of Clean Air for blue skies - Webinar –
We care about the right to clean air: UN work on industry, environment and health

Soraya Smaoun, Air Quality Coordinator

UNEP MANDATE

UNEA 3/8 Resolution

Preventing and Reducing Air Pollution to Improve Air Quality Globally

Member States to join/ cooperate with (para 2/3/4)

Specific initiatives (e.g. Climate and Clean Air Coalition, Batumi Action for Cleaner Air)

Specific issues (e.g. small particulate matter/ black carbon, methane)

Specific sectors (transport , energy etc)

Share knowledge at regional level (para 5)

Inter-Governmental and institutional cooperation (para 6)

UN Environment actions:

Transport (7a + 7b)

Transboundary (7c)

Info sharing platform (7d)

Country support (7d) and technical support (7f)

Assessments (7g)

Indoor air quality (7h)

Global approaches (7i)

Second global policy assessment (by UNEA-5) (7j)

Resolution UNEA 1



UNEP Air Quality Programme as a response to UNEA3 resolution 8

Monitoring & Assessments



- Assessments on Policy action & integrated air and climate action
- Guidance developed on deployment & maintenance of affordable air quality monitoring networks
- Synergies with national action planning supported by CCAC

Policy, Legislation & Technology Support



- National Governments*
- Priority sector focus, national legislation & standards
- Local Governments*
- Priority sector focus, clean air action planning
- Sectoral focus*
- Combined interventions – technology (electrification) & infrastructure (NMT)

Advocacy & Awareness Raising



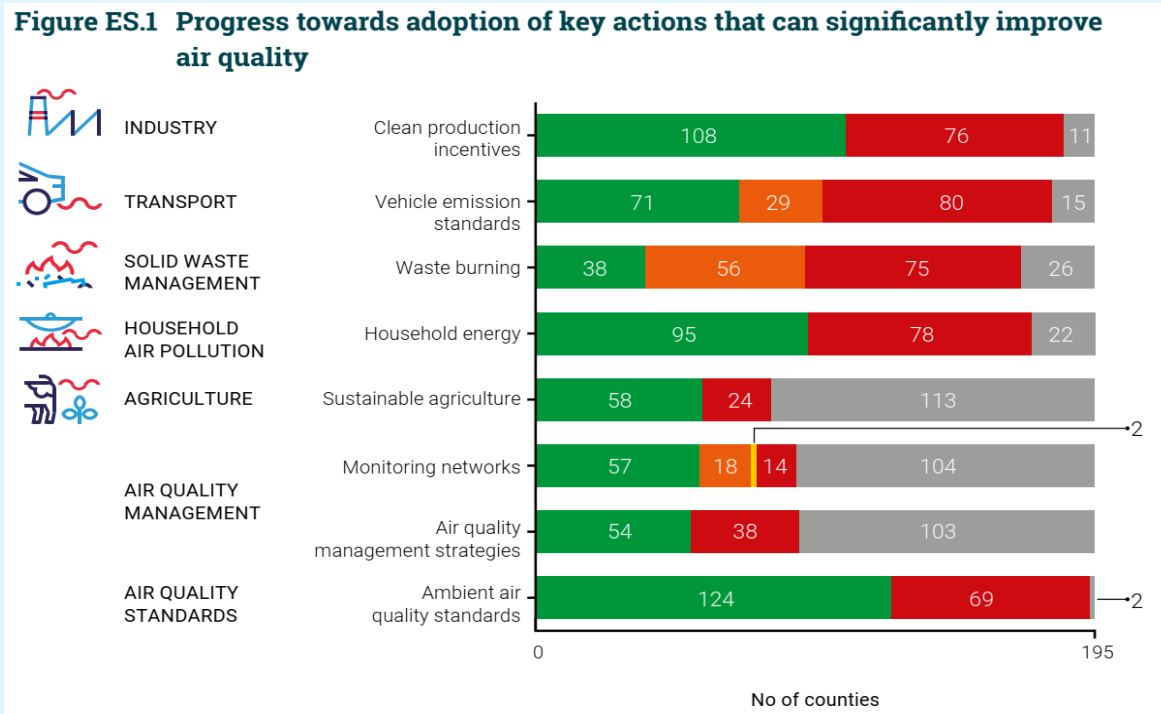
- BreatheLife Campaign
- UNEP Clean Air Patron
- Scaling up local Air Quality Campaigns
- Int'l day of Clean Air for blue skies
- Global Platform on Air Quality (jointly with WHO)

International / Regional cooperation



- Regional Environment and Health Fora (with WHO)
- Asia Pacific Clean Air Partnership
- Europe Air Convention (CLRTAP)
- LAC Ministerial forum

Progress in adopting key actions on air quality



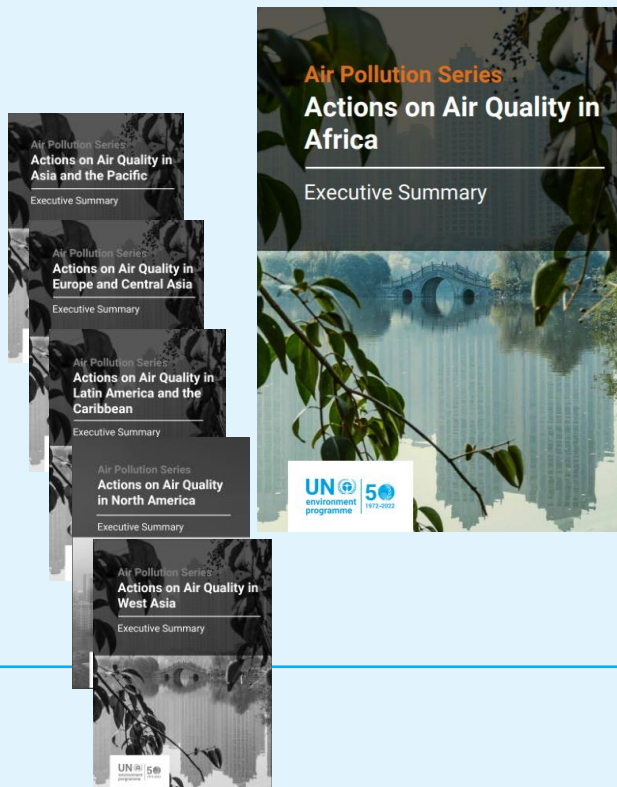
- Green to indicate policy target met
- Orange/Yellow to indicate policy target on track but acceleration needed
- Red to indicate policy target not met
- Grey to indicate no data available

Key findings

- ✓ Legal instruments containing ambient air quality standards increasing
 - **only 33% of countries impose obligations** to meet legislatively mandated Ambient Air Quality Standards
- ✓ National air quality management strategies
 - **approximately 75% of countries do not have an air quality management strategy**
- ✓ Increasing public demand for enhanced global action on air quality + low-cost sensors and the increase in access to air quality information
 - **~70% of countries do not have continuous monitoring at multiple sites**
- ✓ Countries are adopting policies and actions
 - **large systemic challenges such as financing gaps lead to an inability to invest in data analysis, and a lack of enforcement capacity**

UNEP Air Quality Programme

Regional Reports



- In Africa, road transport recorded the most significant improvement towards reducing emissions whereas the energy and industrial sector showed minimal progress since 2016. Open burning of waste remains a major issue of concern and minimal action has been taken to reduce this practice

UNEP Air Quality Programme

Regional Reports



- *In Asia and the Pacific, there has been encouraging progress in reducing air pollution from the industrial, transport and residential energy sectors, but there is still much work to be done in regulating open waste burning practices.*
- *The report also noted that regional and subregional cooperation efforts can assist countries in strengthening their air pollution management frameworks*

UNEP Air Quality Programme

Regional Reports



- In **Europe**, thanks to the continued strengthening of policies drawn up under the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP), emissions of the most monitored air pollutants have decreased in Western, Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe since 2010, but are increasing in Central Asian countries.
- Of notable concern, however, is the increase in ammonia emissions from the agricultural sector

UNEP Air Quality Programme

Regional Reports



- In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, the region has made some progress in developing regulations, policies and frameworks to monitor air pollution, adopting ambient air quality standards and reducing emissions from different key sectors including: 45% of countries adopting advanced vehicle emission standards and 40% of countries in the region having developed programmes to promote the use of clean energy in households for cooking and heating

UNEP Air Quality Programme

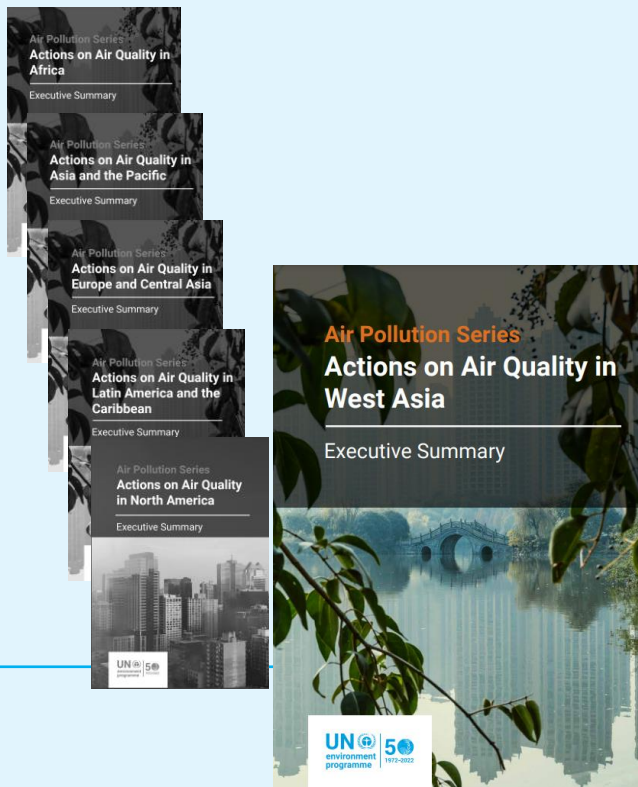
Regional Reports



- In **North America**, significant progress in achieving long-term emission reductions and progress towards cleaner air can be attributed to several of the features of the Air Quality Management Planning Frameworks in place. Key findings include: (i) ambient air quality standards with widespread monitoring provide a foundational accountability framework for air quality management planning; (ii) air pollution does not respect political boundaries, giving rise to the need for regional cooperation; (iii) iterative review and refinement of air quality management programmes are critical to long-term progress and the equitable and effective improvement of air quality;

UNEP Air Quality Programme

Regional Reports



- In **West Asia**, (i) most countries have seen a general improvement in air quality regulations and in developing air monitoring networks; (ii) the energy and industry sectors are at the heart of the current emissions and economic models in the region and the most recent policy reforms are starting to address the changes that need to be made through long-term national energy renovation strategies; (iii) the transport and residential sectors have improved significantly over recent years, while waste management and agriculture have received less attention;

Thank you!

Links to the reports:

- <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/actions-air-quality-global-summary-policies-and-programmes-reduce-air-pollution>
 - <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/regulating-air-quality-first-global-assessment-air-pollution-legislation>
 - <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/air-pollution-and-development-africa-impacts-health-economy-and-human-capital>
-

For more information on the International Day:

- <https://www.cleanairblueskies.org/>
-

Soraya Smaoun
Pollution & Health Unit
Economy Division
soraya.smaoun@un.org