

Overview

The **Kitakyushu Initiative Seminar on Urban Air Quality Management** covered three major areas: existing situations in cities, including major pollution sources, impacts from pollution, and management capacity of the local governments; policy enforcement, in particular from the local governmental viewpoint, public awareness and political will; and successful practices and challenges.

A total of 39 participants attended the seminar, including representatives from 16 cities in the Asia-Pacific Region, the donor community, outside experts, and international initiatives, such as the Clean Air for Asian Cities (CAI-Asia / ADB), Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation (Hiroshima University), Global Environmental Technologies, Hanns Seidel Foundation, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Thailand Office, and the United Nations Environment Programme / Environmental Technology Centre, and resource persons.

The Seminar covered three main aspects: (a) assessment of the existing status of air quality in cities, major pollution sources and the impacts of pollution; (b) policy response and management capacity of local governments, in particular measures adopted for enforcement of regulations and involvement of stakeholders, and; (c) identification of measures that could be adopted in the future to improve the role and capacity of local governments, including good practices which could be effectively replicated.

During the two-day Seminar, 17 city presentations were made. These were followed by focused discussions on the various measures taken by local governments in addressing air quality management issues. Resource persons, as well as representatives from CAI-Asia, IGES, and Hiroshima University, also delivered informative presentations on the activities of international initiatives, capacity building, and importance of the development and application of quantitative indicators.

Presentations by the local governments focused on major sources of air pollution, including automobiles, industry, and household emissions. For each source, local governments have taken a variety of measures to counter air pollution. Examples of

countermeasures for vehicular pollution include the establishment of checkpoints and monitoring centres, “car free days”, fuel conversion, vehicle requirements with regard to particulate traps and diesel catalysts, expansion of public transportation facilities, encouragement and incentives in the use of electric vehicles, and use of “intelligent signals” to address traffic congestion. Measures taken to address pollution from industries include the use of coverage sheets at construction sites, industrial relocation, introduction of cleaner production, and guidance for heavily polluting industries. Emissions from households also contribute to air pollution; to address these issues, countermeasures taken or being considered by local governments include improvements to heating stoves and fuel sources, and conversion to centralized heating systems.

General measures that address air pollution from all sources include development and implementation of legislation on air quality management, urban greening, collection of pollution fees, and campaigns to increase the awareness and participation of residents.

Indicators for target-setting being used by local governments in air quality management include SO₂ and PM₁₀, however, in events where the monitoring system is not sufficient, the percentage of vehicles that emit black smoke, as well as fuel conversion rates, can be effective.

The following were identified as efficient measures: use of encouragement mechanisms, creation of an open environment for decision-making, and improvement of public awareness and participation.

Critical issues identified by local governments included the lack of support in the form of top-level commitment, financing, public participation and partnerships, education, economic incentives, and enforcement, as well as difficulties in coordinating related organisations and departments. Capacity building for personnel in responsible departments was also discussed.

Experts facilitated discussions on overlapping activities being carried out by international initiatives and stressed the necessity for collaboration in selected areas. Potential capacity building activities were presented, such as through eLearning and face-to-face trainings. Experts and resource persons also highlighted the importance of the development

and application of simple quantitative and qualitative indicators in air quality management.

Participants held discussions on the lack of promotion of air pollution countermeasures as a result of the low priority placed on environmental improvement, in comparison to economic development. It is indispensable to obtain the cooperation of residents and the private sector in order to strengthen the implementation of regulations. Additionally, local governments stressed the importance for local governments to identify the means to work within financial, technological, and political limitations.

The Seminar concluded with a field visit organised by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. The field visit consisted of a visit to an air quality monitoring station and roadside emission inspection checkpoint.

The two-day Seminar concluded with open discussions among the local governments, international agencies, and academics with the following points:

- (1) Political will and commitment of local authorities and public support are essential for the enforcement of regulations
- (2) Priority setting and implementation of the capacity building activities should be demand driven
- (3) Sub-national issues would require joint measures through cooperation between cities and should include capacity building activities to undertake appropriate measures
- (4) The Seminar should be followed by implementation of pilot activities, collection of successful practices and development of a common framework for air quality management based on viable indicators

- (5) Systematic training courses on air quality management may be organised as a follow-up to the Seminar
- (6) Successful practices in urban air quality management should be integrated into the training courses, and need to be replicated and widely disseminated
- (7) Coordination among the various networks and initiatives like CAI-Asia, ICLEI, UNEP/IETC and JICA among others would make international cooperation more effective, reduce redundancy of activities and strengthen current activities through information sharing and pooling of resources and/or outputs for a holistic solution to urban air quality issues
- (8) Promote preventive strategies for urban air quality management through improved urban design and land use policies
- (9) Promote restructuring of industrial and energy sectors to improve urban air quality

Activities have been identified as follow-up for the outcomes of the 3rd thematic seminar, including:

Development of a pilot activity on air quality management in Surabaya (Indonesia), focusing on public awareness and participation;

Research on appropriate indicators for use in development and analysis of policies in urban air quality management;

Continued collection and analysis of successful practices in urban air quality management;

Identification of potential areas of collaboration with other international initiatives and networks.