



**Regional Cooperation for Better Air Quality in West Asia: Regional Consultation
Workshop**

3-4 September 2023

Amman, Jordan

Concept Note

I. Concept Note

Introduction

Air pollution poses a major threat to public health, the environment and the global climate. It is the world's single largest environmental health risk. Countries in West Asia, as in other parts of the world, face the challenge of unhealthy air quality.

The United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) passed resolution No. 1/7 on air quality in June 2014. This was the first global resolution of its kind. It recognized air pollution as a major challenge for human health, environment, economy and sustainable development. It also urged various organizations and governments to take action to improve air quality. Air pollution was also prominently discussed in the 68th World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2015, which passed the landmark resolution on "Health and the Environment: Addressing the health impact of air pollution". The UN resolution No. 74/212 of 19 December 2020, which declared the international day for clean air, urged stronger international cooperation at the global and regional levels in various areas related to improving air quality. These include collecting and using data, conducting joint research and development, and sharing best practices.

According to an analysis by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), West Asian countries have made significant progress in setting and implementing policies to improve air quality. However, more action is needed in several aspects, such as compiling emission inventories, enforcing regulations, adopting cleaner vehicles and fuels standards, enhancing air quality monitoring and data analysis, and communicating air quality information and public roles to the people.

Therefore, the region would greatly benefit from joint planning, sharing data and best practices at the regional level. UNEP West Asia Office, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), is organizing this regional consultation workshop to foster regional cooperation for air quality management in the region.

Objective of the Consultation Workshop

The consultation meeting aims to foster a coordinated approach for air quality management in West Asia. The specific objectives are:

- To enhance coordination and cohesion among West Asian countries on air quality management issues.
- To present and discuss the proposed establishment of a regional network for West Asian countries to collaborate on air quality management solutions.

Participants

The meeting is designed for policy officials and technical personnel from line ministries and national agencies who are involved in air quality management in West Asia. Two representatives (one from environment and one from health) from each of the following countries will be invited: Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. UN agencies and active regional institutions working on air pollution in West Asia will also be invited to participate. Around 35 participants are expected to be in attendance.