West Asia Air Quality Network
Meeting and Capacity Building Workshop 2026

6-8 October 2026 – Aqaba, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Background and Rationale

The West Asia Air Quality Network (WAAQN) was established following the recommendations of Member States during the 2023 Regional Consultation Workshop on *Regional Cooperation for Better Air Quality in West Asia*, with the aim of strengthening regional cooperation on air quality management through knowledge exchange, technical collaboration, and capacity development.

During the 2024Annual Network Meeting, Member States adopted the WAAQN Framework and agreed on a two-year work plan, which included the organization of annual network meetings and regional capacity-building activities. The 2025 Annual Meeting and Capacity-Building Workshop, focused on developing National Clean Air Strategies and Action Plans, reducing emissions from key pollution sectors, and introducing the Global Air Quality Management Exchange Platform (AQMx) as a regional knowledge resource. In addition, a Training Manual on Formulating Strategies to Reduce Air Pollution in West Asia was developed in 2025.

Building on these achievements, the 2026 Annual Network Meeting will provide an opportunity to review progress, exchange experiences, and strengthen regional cooperation, while the 2026 Capacity-Building Workshop will provide more focused and practical technical training tailored to the priorities identified by Member States through a pre-meeting questionnaire.

To ensure that the workshop responds directly to the needs and priorities of participating countries, the questionnaire provided countries with an opportunity to shape their technical content by identifying the themes, priority sub-topics, and practical skills considered most beneficial to their national air quality management efforts. The two main priority themes identified through the pre-meeting questionnaire were Air Quality Monitoring Systems and Data Quality, with particular emphasis on monitoring network design and station siting; and Air Quality Index (AQI) development and public reporting; and Air Quality Assessment, with particular emphasis on source attribution/apportionment and air quality forecasting.

Objectives

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA) is organizing the 2026 Annual Meeting of the West Asia Air Quality Network (WAAQN), followed by a two-day Capacity-Building Workshop.

The objectives of the Annual Network Meeting and Capacity-Building Workshop are to:

- Review the progress and achievements made since the establishment of the Network.
- Facilitate the exchange of experiences, initiatives, projects and recent developments related to air quality across West Asia.
- Strengthen technical capacities and expand knowledge in the priority areas identified by participating countries in the pre-meeting questionnaire.

Target participants

The Annual Network Meeting and Capacity-Building Workshop will convene key stakeholders involved in Air Quality Management, Monitoring and Assessment, in West Asia, including:

- Government officials and technical staff from relevant departments of Environment Ministries or Authorities
- Regional/international air quality experts
- UNEP and regional/international partners

Provisional Agenda – WAAQN Meeting (Day 1)

Day 1: Tuesday 6 October 2026			
Time	**Session Type**	**Title**	**Speaker / Facilitator**
09:00 – 09:30	Arrival and Registration		
09:30 – 10:00	Welcoming and Opening Remarks **H.E. Dr. Aiman A. Soleiman, Minister of Environment – The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan** **Mr. Mohamad Najibeddine, Regional Coordinator for Science-Policy, United Nations Environment Programme – Regional Office for West Asia**		
10:00 – 10:30	Group Photo and Coffee Break		
10:30 – 11:15	Session 1 – Presentation + Q&A	**Introduction and Regional Level Update** The session will include a presentation of WAAQN workplan and progress throughout the years, an overview of the survey results and how it shaped the workshop agenda.	**Mohamad Najibeddine** *Regional Coordinator for Science-Policy* *UNEP Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP ROWA)*
11:15 – 12:00	Session 2 – Presentation + Q&A	**Global Updates on Air Quality** This session will provide a global update on Air Quality highlighting recent developments, key findings, and international efforts to address air pollution.	**Soraya Smaoun** *Air Quality Coordinator* *Chemicals and Health Branch* *Industry and Economy Division* *UNEP HQ* *(online)*
12:00 – 12:30	Coffee Break		
12:30 – 13:30	Session 3 – Country Presentations	**National Level Updates on Air Quality Management** This session will include an update on air quality management for each country in West Asia, since the last WAAQN meeting. It will include their ongoing activities related to air quality, and any opportunities, gaps and challenges in this area. This session will also feature an interactive exercise on the participants' needs and expectations from the WAAQN.	**Country Representatives**
13:30 – 14:30	Session 4 – Presentation + Q&A	**Training Manual on Formulating Strategies to Reduce Air Pollution in West Asia** A Training Manual was prepared as a background resource for the capacity-building workshop held in 2025 on formulating strategies to reduce air pollution in West Asia, updated in November 2025 after concluding the workshop. This session will introduce the key elements of the Training Manual, highlighting the main concepts, tools, and methodologies.	**Dr. Marwan AlDimashki** *Consultant* *(online)*
14:30 – 15:30	Lunch		

Provisional Agenda – WAAQN Workshop (Days 2 and 3)

Day 2: Wednesday 7 October 2026 ***Theme:* Strengthening Air Quality Management through Monitoring, Data and Public Reporting**			
Time	**Session**	**Title**	**Speaker / Facilitator**
08:30 – 09:00	Introduction and Overview of the Agenda		
09:00 – 09:30	Session 1 – Presentation + Q&A	**Introduction to the Environmental Policy Tracker** This session will introduce the Environmental Policy Tracker, highlighting its role in documenting and assessing policy responses to air pollution and supporting the analysis of policy measures alongside air quality data.	**Pinya Sarasas** *Programme Management Officer, Responsible for the Environmental Policy Tracker project* *UNEP* *(online)*
09:30 – 10:00	Session 2 – Presentation + Q&A	**Overview of the Air Quality Management (AQMx) platform** Building on the policy context provided in Session 1, this session introduces the AQMx platform and its tools for strengthening air-quality management. It will also introduce the AQMx guidance, which provides practical, step-by-step recommendations for 9 areas of AQM and is available in all UN languages, including Arabic.	**Juliette Laurent** *Air Quality Specialist Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC)* *UNEP* *(online)*
10:00 – 10:30	Coffee Break		
10:30 – 11:00	Session 3 – Presentation + Q&A	**Air Quality Index (AQI) Development and Public Reporting** Building on the WHO publication Air quality indexes Key considerations and roadmaps for best practices, this session will focus on considerations and best practices for the development of Air Quality Indexes. It will also focus on effective communication strategies for public engagement and reporting.	**Román Pérez Velasco** *Technical officer (air quality and health)* *WHO Regional Office for Europe, European Centre for Environment, Climate Change and Health* *(online)*
11:00 – 11:45	Session 4 – Exercise	**Practical Exercise on "Air Quality Index"** This session will include a practical exercise and/or case studies related to the previous session.	**Facilitator:** **Michael Hindeleh**
11:45 – 12:00	Coffee Break		
12:00 – 13:30	Session 5 – Presentation + Q&A	**AQMx Guidance and Key recommendations on "Monitoring" and "Source Attribution"** With the AQMx guidance and its key elements introduced in Session 2, this session will focus on fundamental building blocks of effective air-quality management: this session will therefore explore monitoring systems, data quality and source attribution/apportionment. It will explore key considerations for designing and strengthening air-quality monitoring systems including station siting, ensuring data quality, and understanding the contribution of different pollution sources.	**Dr. Deepchandra Srivastava** *Research Associate* *Yusuf Hamied Department of Chemistry* *University of Cambridge* *(online)*
13:30 – 14:00	Session 6 - Exercise	**Practical Exercise on "Monitoring" and "Source Attribution"** This session will include a practical exercise and/or case studies related to the previous session.	**Facilitator:** **Michael Hindeleh**
14:00 – 15:00	Lunch		

Day 3: Thursday 8 October 2026 ***Theme:* From Air Quality Data to Assessment, Inventories and Forecasting**			
Time	**Session**	**Title**	**Speaker / Facilitator**
08:30 – 9:00	Recap and Overview of the Agenda		
09:00 – 10:00	Session 7 – Presentation + Q&A	**Introduction to Air Quality Assessment and Key findings from the Global Economic Assessment of Climate and Clean Air Action 2026** Building on the monitoring, data quality, source attribution and AQI concepts covered on the second day of the event (first day of the workshop), this session will move from generating and communicating air-quality information to using this information to support broader air-quality assessment and decision-making. Assessments are more than just a report, and developing an assessment involves engaging governments, local policymakers, scientists, technical experts, and other key stakeholders in a well-structured consultation process. This session will highlight key findings from the Global Economic Assessment of Climate and Clean Air Action developed by UNEP/CCAC (Hidden Assets Report), particularly for West Asia region.	**Nathan Borgford-Parnell** *Science Affairs Lead* *CCAC Secretariat* *(online)*
10:00 – 10:15	Coffee Break		
10:15 – 11:15	Session 8 – Presentation + Q&A	**Air Quality Forecasting** This session will explore how emissions information, monitoring data, meteorological conditions and modelling approaches can be integrated to generate air-quality forecasts and support timely responses, as air quality forecasting provides an important basis for anticipating pollution episodes and supporting timely air quality measures.	**Sara Basart** *Scientific Officer* *Global Atmosphere Watch (GAW) Programme* *Department of Science, Services and Capacity Development* *World Meteorological Organization (WMO)* *(online)*
11:15 – 11:45	Session 9 – Exercise	**Practical Exercise on "Air Quality Forecasting"** This session will include practical exercise and/or case studies related to the previous session.	**Facilitator:** **Michael Hindeleh**
11:45 – 12:00	Coffee Break		
12:00 – 13:30	Session 10 – Presentation + Q&A	**AQMx Guidance and Key recommendations on "Emissions Inventory" and "Forecasting"** This session will introduce the key concepts, approaches and methodologies used to develop emissions inventories, and provide an overview of how emissions information contributes to air-quality forecasting and assessment.	**Dr. Cynthia Randles** *AQMx Emissions Inventory & Forecasting expert* *Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC)* *UNEP* *(online)*
13:30 – 14:00	Session 11 – Survey and Discussion	**Workshop Wrap-up and Next Steps** This session will include a feedback survey on the workshop, as well as a brief questionnaire on the next steps.	**Mohamad Najibeddine** *Regional Coordinator for Science-Policy* *UNEP Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP ROWA)*
14:00 – 15:00	Lunch		