



International Day
of Clean Air
for blue skies

The 2022 International Day of Clean Air for blue skies

#TheAirWeShare:

A Practical Guide for Individuals, Cities, Governments,
Schools & Universities, Businesses, Civil society



On September 7, 2022, the world will celebrate the third International Day of Clean Air for blue skies

calling for global action to combat air pollution, one of the greatest health and environmental challenges of our time. The day invites us all to consider how we can support action for clean air in our countries, cities and businesses, and make changes in our daily lives to reduce air pollution.

These actions, in turn, benefit people's health, protects ecosystems, and reduces climate warming air pollutants and greenhouse gases.

The world needs to act now

What is air pollution and why does it matter to me?

Air pollution is caused by gases and particles emitted by a variety of human activities and natural sources. Nine out of 10 people worldwide breathe polluted air.

Air pollution is the most important health issue of our time, causing 1 in 9 deaths globally and an estimated 7 million premature deaths every year.

Air pollution causes death from heart disease, lung disease, lung cancer and stroke. Air pollution also harms our natural environment, decreasing the oxygen supply in our oceans, making it harder for plants to grow and contributing to climate change.

But air pollution is preventable. Solutions are known and can be implemented.



Five sectors are the main sources of human-driven air pollution. Good policies and practices can significantly reduce emissions from each sector.

1. Agriculture

Methane, generated from agricultural processes and livestock, contributes to ground-level ozone air pollution, causing asthma and other respiratory illnesses. Methane is also a powerful greenhouse gas that has contributed to as much as 45% of current net-global warming. Open burning to clear agricultural fields and land is a leading contributor of particulate pollution including black carbon.

See [here](#) for more info about sources and effects of air pollution.

2. Transport

Fine particulate matter including black carbon, ozone and nitrogen dioxide are all linked to emissions from the global transport sector. Exposure to vehicle emissions is linked to up to 400,000 premature deaths a year and approximately \$1 trillion in health damages.

3. Households

Particulate matter including black carbon, carbon monoxide, lead and mercury are the main pollutants from burning solid fuels in open fires and inefficient stoves inside homes. Household air pollution causes 4.3 million premature deaths annually.

4. Industry

Large amounts of carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, particulate matter and chemicals are released into the air by industries.

5. Waste

Methane, particulate matter and other toxins are all released in waste burning. Open burning of waste also emits persistent organic pollutants and toxic chemicals that enter the food chain, ecosystems, and reduces climate warming air pollutants and greenhouse gases.

Why is air pollution an urgent issue now?

Health

Evidence of the effect of air pollution on human health is stark and mounting. Long known to cause cardiovascular and respiratory disease, in recent years exposure to air pollution has been found to disrupt a range of biological and developmental mechanisms increasing the risk for diabetes, dementia, impaired cognitive development and lower intelligence levels. About 7 million people worldwide die prematurely from air pollution each year.

Human Rights

In at least 155 countries, a healthy environment is recognized as a constitutional right. Obligations related to clean air are implicit in a number of international human rights instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Clean Air and the Sustainable Development Goals

Fulfilling the right to breathe clean air goes hand in hand with achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including healthy lives for all, sustainable cities, universal access to clean energy and effective action to address climate change.

Climate

Air pollution and climate change are intrinsically linked as they share common sources. Therefore well designed control measures can achieve benefits for both climate and local air quality. For example, sixteen short-lived climate pollutant control measures addressing major sources of methane and black carbon, could simultaneously reduce global warming by up to 0.5°C over the next few decades, avoid 2.4 million premature deaths from air pollution and avoid more than 50 million tonnes of crop losses per year due to ground-level ozone.

Environment

Air pollutants impact the environment. They can change or deplete nutrients in soil and waterways, endanger vital freshwater sources, harm forests and minimize crop yields, introduce toxins and heavy metals to the food chain and damage cultural icons such as monuments and statues.

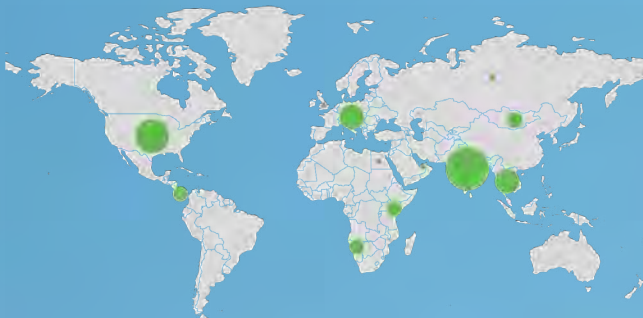
Economic

The most evident economic impact of air pollution is the cost to public health. Air pollution costs the global economy more than US\$5 trillion every year in welfare costs. The effects are worse in the developing world, where in some places, welfare losses cost nearly 7.5 per cent of GDP.

Let's Act Now for #TheAirWeShare



Everyone is invited to take part!



Explore the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies website to learn about the different types of air pollution and why they matter to you using infographics, quizzes and stories from around the world. Governments, cities, schools, businesses, organizations.

Use the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies website and this practical guide to get inspired on the types of activities you can host on September 7 and register your events on the site. These could include working from home, biking to buy groceries or encouraging your city to introduce a car-free day.

All registered events will be given global visibility on the site via a real-time map.

In the weeks after the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies, the site will share stories on commitments made by cities, governments and the private sector and track how we have collectively moved the needle on air pollution and we will keep it active throughout the year as we prepare for 2023!

[Register your event on our world map](#)

Practical Guide Individuals



99% of the people on this planet are breathing polluted air. From 23 August, through to International Day of Clean Air for blue skies on September 7, we are calling on everyone to take action for #TheAirWeShare. Alongside celebrities, influencers and creators, this International Day of Clean Air for blue skies, everyone is invited to consider, commit and announce to your family, friends, peers and larger networks on social media:



WASTE

Reduce your waste, compost food, recycle non-organic trash, reuse grocery bags and **don't burn trash**



DIET

Switch to a **plant-rich diet**, cut single use plastic products, and consider ways of **travelling through means that pollute less**.



TRANSPORT

Use public transport, cycle or walk to get around.



ENERGY

- Check efficiency ratings for home heating systems and cook-stoves, favouring fuels and technologies that **reduce emissions and protect health**.
- **Conserve energy**, turn-off lights and electronics when not in use, use appliances with high energy-efficiency ratings in your home. This will **reduce emissions and save money**.



LOBBY FOR CHANGE

Encourage and support your government and businesses to **take measures to improve air quality**.



#WORLDCLEANAIRDAY

On September 7, when International Day of Clean Air for blue skies is observed worldwide, make a social media post by a taking photo or video of yourself fulfilling your commitment and use the hashtag **#WorldCleanAirDay**.

Practical Guide Civil Society



On the International Day of Clean Air of Clean Air for blue skies we should all think about making pledges to be more sustainable in our consumption and reduce air pollution in our daily lives. Here are some practical tips to get started:



LOBBY FOR CHANGE

- Advocate and support public authorities in implementing programmes to **address the issue of air pollution**.
- **Work with private organisations** to support incorporation of practices to **green the value chain**.



TAKE INDIVIDUAL ACTION

- **Commit to promoting and using public transport**, cycling or walking short distances, and carpooling where possible.
- Make a commitment to **reduce and recycle trash**.
- Consider how **combatting air pollution** could be integrated into your activities.



ORGANISED GROUP ACTION

- Organize a **tree planting activity**.
- Organize a **trash clean-up event**.
- Organize public events and campaigns to improve public knowledge and action to **address the issue of air pollution**.
- Work with artists and musicians to create events and exhibitions that **raise awareness in your communities**.



#WORLDCLEANAIRDAY

Use the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies as an opportunity to **ask your local authorities to provide timely, regular air quality data** and petition for legislation to control the worst polluters.

Practical Guide Schools and Universities



The International Day of Clean Air for blue skies can be a platform for students and education officials to lead the fight for cleaner air and ask their governments and schools to transition to cleaner energy. Here are some examples of actions that could be taken:



TRANSPORT

- Commit to providing **electric buses** and making your school campus **bicycle friendly**.
- Create **no-car idling zones** near your school or university campuses.



EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

- Explore options and **install air quality monitors** so that the community is aware of the air they are breathing. Announce this on the Day.
- **Ask teachers and professors** to teach about the issue of air pollution and how it is linked to climate change and development.
- Integrate educational content and activities to **improve students' knowledge** and action on environmental issues in general and on **pollution reduction** in particular.



ORGANISED GROUP ACTION

- **Ask students to bring in seedlings** for a tree-planting event
- Support students in the creation of environmental clubs, online or on campus, which can **empower youth to be innovative** and come up with ideas to tackle air pollution



#WORLDCLEANAIRDAY

- Explore and commit on the Day to **using renewable energy on your campuses.**
- The Day can be used as platform for students and education officials to **lead the fight for cleaner air** and ask their governments and schools to **transition to cleaner energy**

Practical Guide Cities



Consider using the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies to raise awareness about actions your city is taking to improve air quality. Here are some ideas:



TRANSPORT

- Provide **free public transport** in urban areas to raise awareness to encourage drivers to **leave their cars at home**.
- Organize eco-walks and public cycling events to **promote walking and bicycling**.
- Create **car-free streets**.



EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

- Join **BreatheLife** to raise public awareness about the health and climate impacts from air pollution and commit to track progress, share experiences and best practices through the BreatheLife Network.
- **Share online educational materials** for local schools.



EVENTS

- **Organize tree-planting** activities.
- Work with artists and musicians to create events and exhibitions that **raise awareness across your city.**
- Organize an **in-person or virtual event** with local city officials and health professionals.



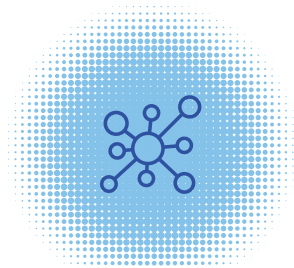
#WORLDCLEANAIRDAY

Share pictures, videos and stories on social media using **#WorldCleanAirDay**

Practical Guide Private Sector



Use the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies to make pledges on reducing emissions and investing in research and development to imagine new and less damaging ways of doing business:



CREATE A NETWORK

- **Building networks** with like-minded businesses to promote ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable business ideas that **reduce air pollution**.
- **Join the Alliance for Clean Air** convened by the World Economic Forum



INVEST

- **Investing** in and promoting products, solutions, and technologies that **cut emissions and reduce pollution**.
- Make pledges on reducing emissions and greening the value chain, **adopting more sustainable production/business practices** and investing in research and development to imagine new and **less damaging ways of doing business**.



IMPROVE SUPPLY CHAIN

- **Tracking and reducing air pollutants** and greenhouse gases from facilities and supply chains.
- **Using recycled and recyclable materials** in products and packaging, reducing and waste from production cycles, moving toward **renewable energy sources**, and by opting for **energy-efficient transport**.

Practical Guide Government & Policy Makers



Consider using the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies to make commitments to improve air quality. Here are some ideas:



NATIONAL POLICIES

- Announce **new regulations** to reduce harmful air pollutants from industrial sources.
- Commit to policies that improve municipal solid **waste management** and reduce emissions from that sector.
- Pledge to **reduce** subsidies **from fossil fuels**.
- Commit to integrate air quality and climate planning, management and **emissions inventories**.
- Commit to implement local and national **air quality action plans**.



HUMAN HEALTH

- Commit to **assess** the number of **lives that are saved**, the health gains in children and other vulnerable groups, and the avoided financial costs to health systems that result from implementing new policies.
- Put in place policies that **increase access to clean, non-polluting energy sources** in all homes.
- Commit to **monitor air quality**, assess pollution sources across key sectors and tackle them to protect citizens from harmful toxins and pollutants.



INTERNATIONAL POLICY

- Join **BreatheLife** to raise public awareness about the health and climate impacts from air pollution and commit to **track progress**, share experiences and best practices through the BreatheLife Network.
- Implement integrated air quality and climate change policies designed to simultaneously **achieve the WHO Ambient Air Quality Guideline values and Paris Agreement climate commitments**.
- Commit to work toward and **advocate** for regional, national and international **action** on sources outside your borders.
- Commit to the **Global Methane Pledge** and national actions to help achieve a 30% reduction in global methane emissions below 2020 levels by the end of this decade.



TRANSPORT

- Implement **e-mobility** and sustainable mobility policies and actions with the aim of making a decisive **impact on road transport emissions**.
- Commit to a **phase out petrol and diesel** based cars.



INVESTMENTS

- Pledge more **investments in renewable energy** sources.



Practical Guide International Community

Consider using the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies to make commitments to improve air quality. Here are some ideas:



SUPPORTING GOVERNMENTS

Help national governments improve their ability to plan and **implement emissions reductions** and monitor progress in reducing air pollution.



SHAPING GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

Support developing countries **move away from using polluting fuels** for energy and biomass for cooking.



INVESTMENT

Steer investment to renewable and cleaner electricity generation, **moving away from fossil-based electricity**, to enable cleaner electric mobility, meet increased demand for cooling, electrical appliances, and clean cooking.



REDUCED METHANE EMISSIONS

Reduce methane emissions, thus reducing ozone pollution and its impacts on health, crop productivity, and forest growth.



You can download this Brand Guide together with other branding assets, including the logo and logo lockup files from:

cleanairblueskies.org/get-involved/brand-guide

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