

Draft Concept Note

Symposium on International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies 2026

September 7, 2026

Seoul, Republic of Korea

Background

Air pollution remains one of the most pressing environmental and public health challenges in North-East Asia. Fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and ground-level ozone continue to pose significant risks to human health, ecosystems, agricultural productivity, and climate resilience. Despite important progress made by countries in the region through strengthened regulations, monitoring systems, and technological advancements, PM and ozone pollution remain persistent challenges requiring coordinated regional responses.

The International Day of Clean Air for blue skies, observed annually on 7 September pursuant to United Nations General Assembly resolution 74/212, provides an important opportunity to raise awareness, promote international cooperation, and accelerate action toward cleaner air.

In this context, the North-East Asia Clean Air Partnership (NEACAP), National Air Emission Inventory and Research Center (NAIR) of the Republic of Korea and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) will jointly organize the “Symposium on International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies ” to promote knowledge exchange, strengthen regional cooperation, and highlight emerging policy and technological approaches to address PM and ozone pollution.

The symposium will bring together policymakers, researchers, technical experts, international organizations and relevant stakeholders to discuss integrated air quality management approaches, advances in monitoring and modelling, and innovative solutions including artificial intelligence (AI)-based applications for air pollution analysis and forecasting.

Objectives

The symposium aims to

- Promote regional dialogue and cooperation on PM and ozone pollution;
- Share recent policy developments, scientific findings, and best practices;
- Explore innovative approaches including AI applications for air quality analysis and forecasting; and
- Strengthen science-policy linkages among governments, experts, and international organizations.

Organizers

- ESCAP Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia, serving as the Secretariat of NEACAP
- National Air Emission Inventory and Research Center (NAIR), Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment, Republic of Korea
- United Nations Environment Programme

Expected Outcomes

The symposium is expected to strengthen regional dialogue for cooperation, facilitate knowledge exchange on PM and ozone management, and promote innovative and science-based approaches toward cleaner air in North-East Asia.

Provisional Programme

Time and Date (Korea Standard Time UTC+9)	Monday 07 September 2026
9:00-9:30	Opening Ceremony (30 min) Opening remarks and photography Lead organizer: NAIR
9:30-11:00	Session 1 - Towards Coordinated and Integrated Air Quality Management: Addressing PM and Ozone Interlinkages (90 min) Presentations and Q&A (3 to 4 speakers) Lead organizer: NEACAP (through ESCAP as NEACAP Secretariat)
11:00-11:15	Coffee Break (15 min)
11:15-12:45	Session 2 - Harnessing Artificial Intelligence (AI): Strengthening PM2.5 and Ozone Analysis (90 min) Presentations and Q&A (3 to 4 speakers) Lead organizer: TBD

12:45-14:00	<i>Lunch</i> (75 min)
14:00-15:00	IDCABS Commemoration ceremony (60 min) hosted by the Ministry of Climate, Energy and Environment (MCEE)
15:00-15:30	<i>Coffee Break</i> (30 min)
15:30-17:00	Session 3 - Advances in PM2.5 and Ozone Analysis: Monitoring, Modelling and Policy Approaches (90 min) Presentations and Q&A (3 to 4 speakers) Lead organizer: UNEP
17:00-17:30	Closing Session Summary and Closing Remarks (30 min) Lead organizer: NAIR
18:30-20:30	<i>Welcome Reception</i> (18:30-20:30)