

Summary of China Air Quality Management Development in 2013

Many provinces and cities in China experienced very serious haze in January 2013, especially [Beijing and the surrounding area](#), which caused widespread concern of the whole society. In October, light fog hung over North China, causing the suspension of flights and closure of expressways, while [most parts of East China were affected by haze](#). In December, [China suffered another severe bout of air pollution](#), thick haze stretched from Beijing to Shanghai, a distance of about 1,200 kilometers (750 miles).

Serious air pollution brings enormous socio-economic losses and health damage. The specialized cancer agency of the United Nations World Health Organization (WHO) announced that [outdoor air pollution is a leading environmental cause of cancer deaths](#). Outdoor air pollution ranked fourth both in mortality and in the overall burden on health rates in China, where it contributed to [1.2 million deaths and 25 million healthy years of life lost in 2010](#), according to the 2010 Global Burden of Disease (GBD) report.

China Vice-premier [Li Keqiang pledges measures in fight for clean air](#) in January 2013. China's State Council released its [Action Plan for Air Pollution Prevention and Control](#) (Action Plan) in September 2013, which covered one-sixth of China's territory. The Action Plan sets the road map for air pollution and control for the next five years in China with a focus on three key regions – Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei area (Jing-Jin-Ji), Yangtze River Delta (YRD) and Pearl River Delta (PRD). [The goal is to improve overall air quality across the country and greatly reduce the number of heavily polluted days by 2017](#).

Many cities and regions in China started heavy air pollution emergency response plan, including [Beijing](#), [Shanghai](#), [Guangzhou](#), [Hangzhou](#), [Tianjin](#), [Zhengzhou](#), [Hengshui](#), [Xingtai](#), [Dalian](#) and [Shandong province](#) etc. China Meteorological Administration set up [a forecast and warning center for environmental meteorology](#), aiming to monitor and forecast haze, smog and other related environmental meteorology in Beijing and its neighboring Tianjin, Hebei and other North China areas.

[“Implementation Rules of Action Plan against Air Pollution in Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei and Surrounding Areas”](#) was released by MEP in September. The government has [set up a 5-billion-yuan special fund designated for airborne pollution control and management work](#) in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei cluster, the Inner Mongolia autonomous region, Shandong and Shanxi provinces.

YRD cities economy coordination meeting and the 13th joint mayor meeting were held in April, during which [Environmental Protection Declaration](#) was released. In December, [YRD held a leaders meeting](#), discussing the mechanism of regional air pollution joint prevention and control and the planning of joint actions to maintain the sustainable development of the region.

Guangdong province released [“PRD Clean Air Action Plan Phase II \(2013-2015\)”](#) in February and



Shenzhen announced "[Shenzhen Air Quality Improvement Planning](#)" in September. [Guangzhou province will promote air pollution prevention and control together with Shenzhen and Hongkong](#), strengthening the regional collaboration to improve the air quality of YRD.

[Six heavy polluting industries in 47 cities will gradually comply with special international emission limits on airborne pollutants](#), starting on March 1, 2013. Experts expect the move to have great impact on emission reduction of the affected industries: thermal power, iron and steel, petrochemical, cement, non-ferrous metal and chemical.

In January, [Guidelines of Prioritizing Urban Public Transport Development in China](#) was released by the State Council, requiring city governments to give priority to public transport in urban transport development. Also, China's State Council issued a [timetable for its program to upgrade fuel quality](#), with a strict standard to be promoted nationwide before 2017. In September, [China has renewed private-buyer subsidies for "new energy" or electric-powered vehicles](#) for another three years, in part to fight air pollution. The policy is aimed at "accelerating the development of new-energy vehicles, promoting energy saving and reducing air pollution".

In April, a [Joint U.S.-China Statement on Climate Change](#) was issued and a climate change working group was initiated. In the [5 new action initiatives](#), emission reduction from heavy-duty and other vehicles is the first initiative, under which efficient and clean freight will be promoted with U.S. EPA providing technical assistance for implementation of green freight policies through the [China Green Freight Initiative](#). In December, United States and China commit to implement and enforce their current schedules for implementation of low-sulfur fuel and for motor vehicle emissions standards under "[Joint Fact Sheet on Strengthening U.S.-China Economic Relations](#)".

For more detailed information, please click the links above.

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Clean Air Asia was established in 2001 as the premier air quality network for Asia by the Asian Development Bank, World Bank, and USAID. Its mission is to promote better air quality and livable cities by translating knowledge to policies and actions that reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from transport, energy and other sectors.

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