

# ABLE MENT GOA

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## **Blueair calls on the UN to add a Sustainable Development Goal on “Clean Air”**

New York, 2 February 2018: Today, at the inaugural United Nations Forum on Global Medical Health & Environment, Blueair, a world-leader in air purification solutions, called on the international community to add a Sustainable Development Goal on “Clean Air”.

Speaking at the global platform for high-level dialogue on health and environment, Blueair Sustainable Business Director, Sara Alsén, said: “Air pollution harms human health, affects food security, hinders economic development and contributes to climate change, and causes more than seven

million premature deaths every year. To encourage cross-sector collaboration to tackle indoor and outdoor pollution, affecting nine out of 10 people in the world, the UN must add a Sustainable Development Goal for “Clean Air.”

**Air pollution: A global health threat.** According to the World Health Organization, air pollution is the world’s single biggest environmental health threat. About 92% of the world’s population is exposed to unhealthy levels of air pollution, causing more than seven million premature deaths a year. Nearly 3.7 million are caused by outdoor air pollution-related diseases and more than 4.3 million by disease caused by poor indoor air quality. The most vulnerable populations – women, children and elderly – are particularly affected.

**SDGs: Clean water and clean energy but not clean air.** There are currently 17 goals recognizing almost every issue of global concern – from poverty, education and gender equality to clean water and sanitation, clean energy and climate action through to decent work and peace, justice and strong institutions. The vital resource of clean air has, however, not been recognized. Instead ambient air pollution is addressed as part of the solution to help reduce marine pollution, mitigate effects on ecosystems and biodiversity. Only SDG 11, Sustainable Cities and Communities, has an explicit target linked to improving air quality. None of the existing goals address the biggest health concern, that of indoor air pollution.

**Indoor air: Five times more polluted than outdoors.** Indoor air is up to five times more polluted than outdoor air. Toxic chemicals from paint, building materials, cleaning products, clothing and furniture mix with the outdoor air entering buildings through windows and ventilation systems. In low- and middle-income countries, some three billion people still cook and heat their homes using wood, crop wastes, charcoal and coal. All of these heating sources produce high levels of tiny soot particles that can penetrate lung tissue, make their way into the bloodstream and cause disease. Exposure is especially high among women and young children, who spend most of their time at home.

**SDGs: Drive business and government agenda.** Adding an SDG for “Clean Air” will spur action among government, business, academia and civil society, promoting investment and driving initiatives to achieve real change. For cleaner air indoors, it means helping rural communities move to cleaner fuels and clean stoves to protect women and children from disease. It also means

identifying global indoor air standards, monitoring indoor air quality in schools and public spaces, legislating and enforcing indoor air quality regulations and educating people about what they can do to exert greater control over the air quality in their homes. For cleaner air outdoors, cleaner fuels, innovative emission control technologies and global air standards – not guidelines – are required along with monitoring, legislating and enforcing air quality standards.

Read more: <https://www.blueair.com/point-of-view/clean-air.pdf>

## **About the Global Forum on Global Medical Health & Environment**

The Global Forum on Global Medical Health & Environment is committed to create a global platform for high-level dialogue, sharing of advanced standards, technology and best-practices, enhancing capacity building, fostering partnership and facilitating effective actions.

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## **About Blueair**

Blueair is a world leading producer of air purification solutions for home and professional use. Founded in Sweden, Blueair delivers innovative, best-in-class, energy efficient products and services sold in over 60 countries around the world. Blueair is part of the Unilever family of brands.

## **Contacts**



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