

BENCHMARKING AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY IN ASIAN CITIES**C. Huizenga¹, G. Haq²**¹*Clean Air Initiative For Asian Cities, Asian Development Bank, Manila, The Philippines*²*Stockholm Environment Institute, University of York, York, UK*

Air pollution continues to pose a significant threat to the environment, quality of life and health of the urban population in Asia. Levels of air pollution in Asian cities regularly exceed World Health Organization recommended guidelines. Many Asian cities have developed some form of air quality management (AQM) system to address the increasing levels of urban air pollution. However, the sophistication and completeness of the AQM system may not be adequate to effectively address the air pollution problem. An assessment of AQM capabilities of twenty-two cities in Asia was undertaken using the MARC Air Quality Management Capability Index questionnaire. Local authorities responsible for AQM in each city completed the questionnaire. The Index outlines four sets of indicators which represent the key components of AQM capability. The self-assessment by the cities is validated against available secondary information sources on AQM in the cities covered in the study. The results of the benchmarking exercise provides a comparative analysis of AQM capability among 22 Asian cities at different stages of economic development. The paper identifies the key measures required to provide a comprehensive AQM system and improve urban air quality in the cities of Asia.