

Raise awareness for health effects of air pollution among athletes and recreational runners

The IAAF (International Association of Athletics Federations) Air Quality Project is a unique global partnership that draws together the effects of air quality on athletes health and performance

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#airquality #smartenvironment #sport #health #running #emissions #athletics #monitoring

1. SUMMARY:

The particles released from emissions have long been known to cause serious diseases and health damage. Athletes who train in open tracks are exposed more than anyone to poor air quality, diseases related to emissions and their exercise performance may be decreased.

The IAAF (International Athletics Associations Federation) in collaboration with the UNEP (United Nations Environment Program) aims to address this problem of air pollution that contributes to 7 million deaths a year worldwide and damages directly the health of athletes. Thus, under this project they are gathering data, conducting studies and helping to raise awareness and educate the public on air quality.

The IAAF Health and Science Department is studying the correlation between air quality and athlete performance, following on from its preliminary research which found a performance reduction in highly polluted environments. Exercising in these atmospheric conditions, besides being extremely harmful, does not allow the athletes to perform at their best and ultimately lowers the standard of the competition.

Kunak was selected in 2018 by the IAAF to deploy air quality monitoring sensors in 1000 tracks around the world over the next five years. The aim of this project is to advocate for clean air by providing real-time information on air quality and athlete performance. In addition, it seeks to influence environmental policies, find solutions for air quality and conduct awareness campaigns.

Kunak air quality monitors are assisting in further research on this subject.

2. MOTIVATION and RESULTS:

The project is moving ahead with successful results. Nowadays, we have already deployed units in the five continents: Monaco, Barcelona, Addis Abeba, Sidney, Mexico city and Yokohama.

We are now **building a new infrastructure** to monitor air pollution also in countries where there is no real-time data. This new infrastructure is already **scaling beyond the competition tracks**.

Our team is proud to participate in this global project and to collaborate with UNEP and SONOMA. So that it can also be really useful for local policy makers that design a more sustainable development.

Acknowledgement:

By creating an air quality monitoring network on athletic tracks around the world, it provides a first-class opportunity to provide evidence to improve the health of citizens and future athletes.