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# AIR QUALITY AND SPORTS. The IAAF (International Association of Athletics Federations) Air Quality Project

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## Abstract

The Air Quality Project, which is being run in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), aims to address the issue of air pollution which contributes to 7 million deaths annually worldwide.

By creating an air quality monitoring network across 1000 athletics tracks around the world – which is being deployed by Spain-based Kunak Technologies – the UNEP/IAAF partnership provides first-hand opportunity to countries with limited air quality data to learn how low-cost sensors can provide evidence to improve the health of its citizens and future athletes. It also demonstrates an innovative approach to solving the air pollution problem.

Focused on athletes' health, the IAAF objectives are:

- To have an air quality monitoring network that links all IAAF certified outdoor tracks around the world within five years (approximately 1000), across the six continents Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and Caribbean, Oceania and South America. Any air quality monitoring networks for IAAF certified indoor tracks will be considered later;
- To collaborate with UN Environment, global NGOs and partners to create a global database of air quality and mitigation initiatives around athletics stadia;
- To utilise the information from this city network of air quality monitors, in collaboration with government and existing air quality monitoring networks, to create data-sets that would allow cities to advise on the best times to participate in sports in their locations, and provide real time updates that can be used to find solutions that would reduce the air quality issues in the stadia locality;
- To work with local and national governments as well as media and communications partners to share the findings of the air quality monitors and to show how poor air quality can affect the quality of life of the community and to promote solutions to address the impacts of pollution on human health;
- To campaign and advocate for clean air by providing real-time information on air quality online and through smartphone technology, and to use that data to influence policy, find air quality solutions and run awareness campaigns.
- To provide insights for a study on the correlation between air quality and the performance of athletes

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