Let’s Talk Models, Measurements, and SLCPs

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Spring is upon us and it seems as if the success of our specialty program offerings is growing as fast as the weeds in my front yard! Our inaugural wildfires conference was more successful than we could have imagined, and our popular modeling conference once again brought together experts in air modeling programs and techniques from throughout the world. As we head into April, we are excited to see another run of our recurring air quality measurements conference and will then be hitting the gas pedal as we race toward our 112th Annual Conference & Exhibition in Québec this June. As someone who spends a significant amount of time overseeing stack tests and reviewing emission results, I know I am looking forward to the content that the measurement’s program has to offer. If you attend one of our specialty conferences and catch me roaming the halls, please pull me aside and introduce yourself. I love getting out to our meetings and events and meeting members and non-members alike.

This month, EM focuses on short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs). While so much of the conversation tends to focus on the longer-lived climate pollutants, such as carbon dioxide, these powerful climate forcers pack quite a punch, making up for their short-lived nature with an impact that is reported orders of magnitude above their long-term cousins. In addition, some of the SLCPs, such as black carbon and fluorinated gases, have measurable health impacts, making discussion of them important regardless of your position on the climate change portion of the conversation. Having been afforded the opportunity to attend the 24th Conference of the Parties (COP) Convention in Katowice, Poland, I heard many solutions proposed for the longer-term pollutants in the high-level meetings, but did not hear much discussion on the short-lived pollutants such as methane, fluorinated gases, and black carbon. While there were debates about pushing for a lower-methane environment, the majority of the conversation focused on carbon dioxide reductions with the elimination of fossil fuels through electric car production, coal phase-out, etc. I’m glad to see the Association giving some time to the lesser-discussed SLCPs. Our Association’s mission is aimed to promote critical environmental decision-making and without addressing all aspects of climate pollution, we would be failing in that mission.

Speaking of climate issues and COP 24, we spent some time at a recent Board of Directors meeting discussing our role on the climate stage and how best to bring added member value with our official observer status with the United Nations Framework on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP. We are close to naming our delegates for COP 25, which will be held in Chile this coming November, and are working on guidelines for those delegates to use in making reports back to our membership. I’m interested in how you value our presence at these meetings and what sort of feedback you would like to see from them. At COP 24 in 2018, former A&WMA President Mike DeBusschere and I tweeted live from the conference and compiled a blog, technical program summaries, and even a few video updates. If you haven’t had a chance to review them, please check them out under the Industry Insights section of our website. After you have, let me know what you thought of our coverage and what you’d like to see from our delegates next time around.

As I send you on to the many pages of high-quality technical content that follow this opening, I encourage those in the climate community to think about the additional content we can bring to members on this topic. In the past, we have developed webinars on impact and adaptation and held specialty conferences on policy trends, compliance programs, and climate action initiatives. If you have an idea that you would like to see us bring to market, please send me an email, give me a call, or track down a member of our Board of Directors. We want to make sure we are bringing you valuable content and offering you opportunities to grow and succeed. Happy Spring!

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