



# PRESS Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Pollution Control Department

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กรมควบคุมมลพิษ  
POLLUTION CONTROL DEPARTMENT

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## H.E. Varawut proactively prepare to prevent and solve forest fires, haze and particulate matter problems in 2023

On 2 September 2022, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) hold the meeting to summarize results and after action review (AAR) on prevention and solution of forest fires, haze and particulate matter in 2023. H.E. Varawut Silpa-archa was the chairman of the meeting and Mr. Athapol Charoenshunsa, Director General of Pollution Control Department (PCD) was the meeting secretary. This meeting was also attended by representatives from relevant agencies in both central area and 17 northern provinces as well as Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Ministry of Transport and the Prime Minister's Office.

H.E. Varawut Silpa-archa said that the purposes of this meeting were to do the after action review of forest fires, haze, and particulate matter prevention and solution in 2022, and to receive problems, obstacle, and suggestion to improve operational guideline appropriately and effectively. This meeting also discussed to prepare the prevention and implementation on forest fires, haze, and particulate matter problems in the next year 2023. In this occasions, the operational guideline will be formulated as the ad hoc plan for the year 2023.

From the intensive and continuous cooperation from all sectors in the 17 northern provinces during the surveillance of forest fires, haze and particulate matter crisis between January 1 and May 31, 2022, the average 24-hour PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration decreased by 27%, from 41  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  in 2021 to 30  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  in 2022. The number of days in PM<sub>2.5</sub> exceeded the standard reduced by 32%, from 103 days in 2021 to 70 days in 2022, and the number of hot spots decreased by 61%, from 61,776 in 2021 to 23,913 in 2022.

For the next season, due to the mass accumulation fuel in the past year, forests fire, haze and particulate matter might be increased. Additionally, from the review of previous year's problems, the local authorities do not have enough budget and workload of personnel for firefighting operations. So that all relevant agencies are requested to prepare the implementation plan in advance. All Governors have to reinforce and set up budget according to the decentralized authorities and expedite the arranging of arable land under the measures, control forest fires in the area of the project to allocate arable land for the community according to the government policy. Henceforth, all sectors, especially the public sectors, such as the Northern Breathing Council, are invited to participate in the activities in order to fully integrate the project in preventing and solving problems for the community to have a better quality of life, H.E. Varawut said.