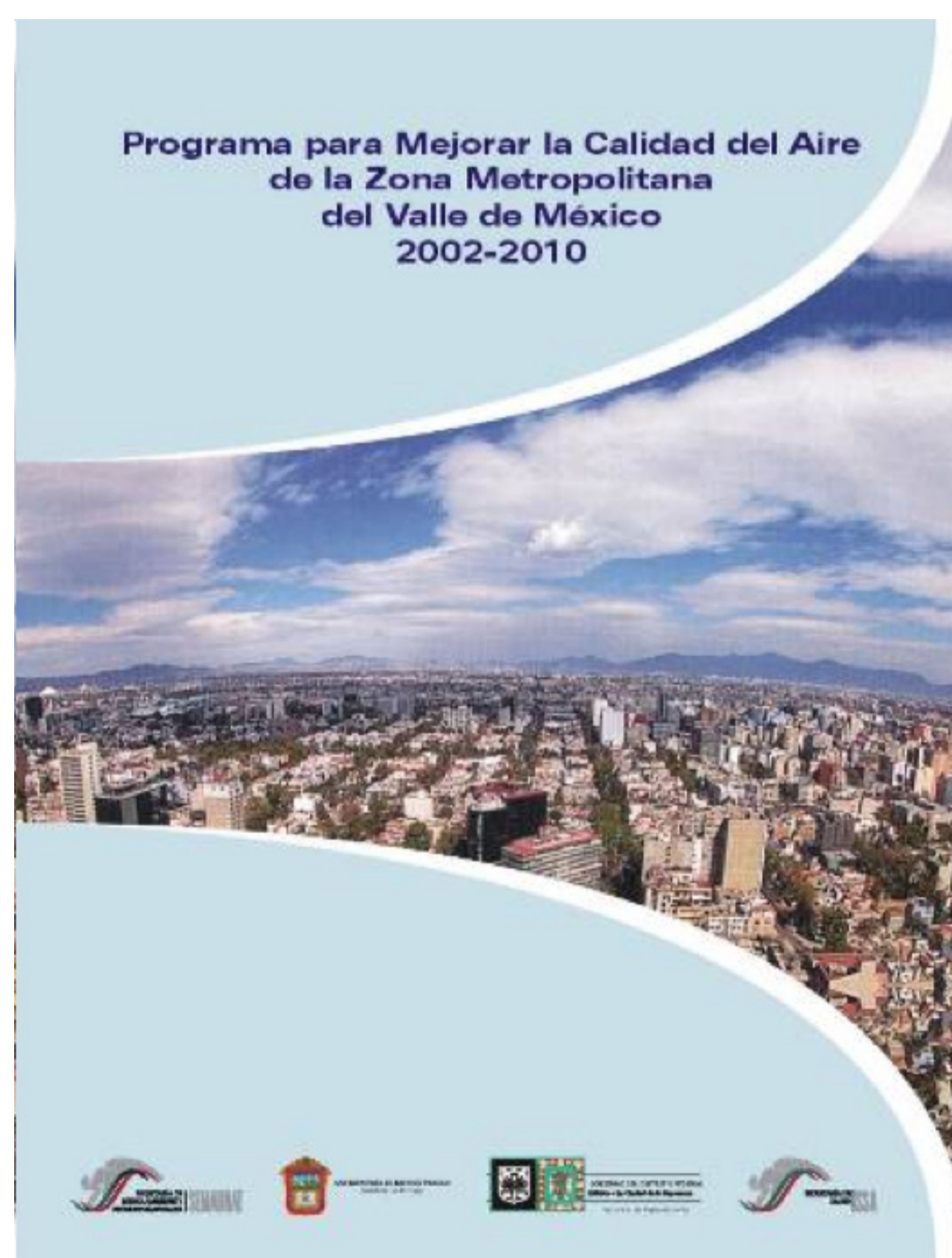




EMISSION CONTROL STRATEGIES IN THE MEXICO CITY METROPOLITAN AREA



Proaire

The "Program to Improve the Air Quality in the Mexico City Metropolitan Area 2002-2010" (PROAIRE) promotes several emission control policies for emissions caused by vehicles, industry, private sector, public services and deforestation. It focuses on the reduction of ozone concentrations and atmospheric particles while promoting environmental education and public participation.

The program aims to reduce pollution levels and keep them below the health-based standards.



Key measures

PROAIRE contains a series of 89 individual measures. These science-based policies and recommendations were drawn from the findings of the Integrated Program on Urban, Regional and Global Air Pollution initiated at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology by Luisa T. Molina and Mario J. Molina (Reference: Air quality in the Mexico Megacity, published by Klumer Academic Press, 2002). The MCMA-2002 and 2003 campaigns, as well as the MCMA-2006 campaign are part of those studies.

A few key measures are:

- To improve fuel quality, lowering the sulfur content in gasoline and diesel.
- To modernize the vehicular verification and "hoy no circula" programs.
- To renovate the public transportation system; from small and medium-sized transit to high capacity public transportation.
- To put into operation major public transportation corridors, such as the Metrobus on Insurgentes Avenue.
- To promote the construction of second story upper-deck freeways over the Periferico, on/off ramps, overpasses, traffic distributors and other highways.
- To control pollutant emissions from industry sources by implementing self-regulation programs.
- To promote the use of solar energy in place of fossil fuels.
- To build bicycle roads and pathways.
- To reduce the emissions generated by power plants located in the Mexico City Metropolitan Area.
- To promote the incorporation of environmental management self-regulating and improvement mechanisms in small and medium businesses.



Continual evaluation and assessment of Proaire

The implementation of the policies and recommendations established by PROAIRE is carried out by the components of the Metropolitan Environmental Commission (CAM): the Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (Semarnat), the Secretariat of Environment of the Mexico City Government (SMA-GDF), the Secretariat of Health, and the National Institute of Ecology.

The impact of PROAIRE's policies will be evaluated through atmospheric emissions inventories and atmospheric monitoring.

The emissions inventories calculate the pollutants emitted by vehicles, industries, services and other sources, making it possible to assess the effectiveness of the control measures. For this reason, it is necessary to keep the inventories constantly updated. The most recent emissions inventory corresponds to the year 2004.

Atmospheric monitoring of criteria pollutants (SO₂, O₃, PM₁₀, NO_x) is essential for the identification of emission reductions that are reflected mostly by a reduction of pollution concentrations in the atmosphere.



Results from Proaire

PROAIRE's policies have helped to reduce the levels of pollution in the atmosphere. While some pollutants have dropped below the limits set by environmental regulations to protect public health and welfare, ozone levels are still not complying with the standard on 60% of the days of the year. Moreover, the annual standard for suspended particles smaller than 10 micrometers is still being exceeded in many parts of the Mexico City Metropolitan Area.

Overall results indicate a downward trend in ozone and PM₁₀. However, they are far from being under control. For this reason, it is necessary to continue working toward the reduction of ozone precursors and suspended particles.

