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***AQ-SERVE Press Release***  
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**Title: European Research Centers of Excellence, Cyprus Government Departments and strategic private partners join forces to measure and improve air quality in Cyprus.**

NICOSIA—August, 2019. Cyprus is situated at the crossroads of air pollution transported from three different continents and is downwind of atmospheric dust originating from two of the world’s largest deserts. Given its location, Cyprus regularly suffers from bad air quality, and it is expected that this situation may worsen in the near future in the context of global warming, regional geopolitical instability, and fast-growing MENA populations. Despite this, little is known still about air pollution in Cyprus (concentration levels, sources, geographical origin), and its impacts on the Cypriot population’s health (e.g. premature deaths) and the economy (e.g. due to health-related associated costs).

Launched in December 2018, the AQ-SERVE<sup>1</sup> project will provide the first-ever risk assessment and evaluation of the health impact of air pollution in Cyprus. AQ-SERVE aims to utilize best-in-class scientific and technological resources to identify the most efficient pollution abatement measures for improving air quality in Cyprus, and enable tangible benefits for public health, the environment, and the economy of Cyprus through the creation and updating of a National Air Quality Action Plan for Clean Air in Cyprus.

Notably, AQ-SERVE marks the first time two Centers of Excellence, the Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East-Climate & Atmosphere Research Center (EMME-CARE) of CyI and ERATOSTHENES: Excellence Research Centre for Earth Surveillance and Space-Based Monitoring of the Environment (EXCELSIOR) of CUT, get together to address the urgent risks air pollution poses to the population of Cyprus and the region.

AQ-SERVE will combine innovative technical developments with new scientific knowledge on the characterization and prediction of air quality, in order to improve preparedness and adaptation strategies. Different scenarios (abatement measures) will be tested in a coupled Air Quality/Health & Risk model with the objective to define efficient mitigation measures which can be translated to the public authorities (National Air Quality Action Plan).

Novel mobile platforms with great innovation potential (e.g. drones) and new cost-effective miniaturized atmospheric sensors will be developed, optimized and tested in real-world conditions to improve control of air quality with the deployment of dense (city-scale) monitoring networks. A spatially-resolved, up-to-date national emission inventory that complies with EU directives, and new information on PM sources and their geographic distribution will support the first national Air Quality (AQ) model platform with forecasting capacities. This AQ model will be utilized by Cyprus public authorities to better adapt their

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<sup>1</sup> AQ-SERVE (Air Quality Services for a Cleaner Air in Cyprus) project has secured funding from RESTART 2016-2020 in the context of programs for research, technological development and innovation of Research Innovation Foundation. AQ-SERVE’s project consortium consists of the Cyprus Institute (CyI), the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT), the European University of Cyprus Research Center (EUC), the Department of Labour Inspection (DLI), the Department of Environment (DoE), the Department of Meteorology (DoM), ADITESS, The Cyprus Health and Safety Association (CySHA), CEA (France), and the Inter-Professional Technical Centre for Studies on Air Pollution (CITEPA).

responses during extreme air conditions (e.g. dust, smog, industrial hazards) and test different abatement scenarios (e.g. switching to natural gas for power generation) to provide quantitative estimates on the effectiveness and (cost) benefits of various air quality mitigation measures and leverage this information to update the National Action Plan for Air Quality accordingly. Further, a Cyprus Central Air Quality Database will be built to gather all atmospheric observations available in Cyprus (e.g. meteorological and air quality network, research monitoring activities, air quality maps archive) and will be available as an open-access reference directory for scientific research of relevant disciplines (e.g. public health, climate, etc.). Finally, a comprehensive health risk assessment/health impact evaluation will be performed (e.g. air pollution exposure map, impact of AQ scenarios on health including cost benefit analysis).