

MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2026

# Global Progress Towards Air Quality Action and its Impacts

SESSION  
CHAIR

PANEL  
MODERATOR



**Kiros Berhane**  
Columbia  
University



**Pallavi Pant**  
Head of Global  
Initiatives, HEI

SPEAKERS &  
PANELISTS



**Maria Neira**

Former Director, WHO &  
Senior Fellow, Clean  
Air Fund



**Forrest Robinette**

Independent  
Consultant



**Jordi Pon**

UNEP



**Ashish Tiwari**

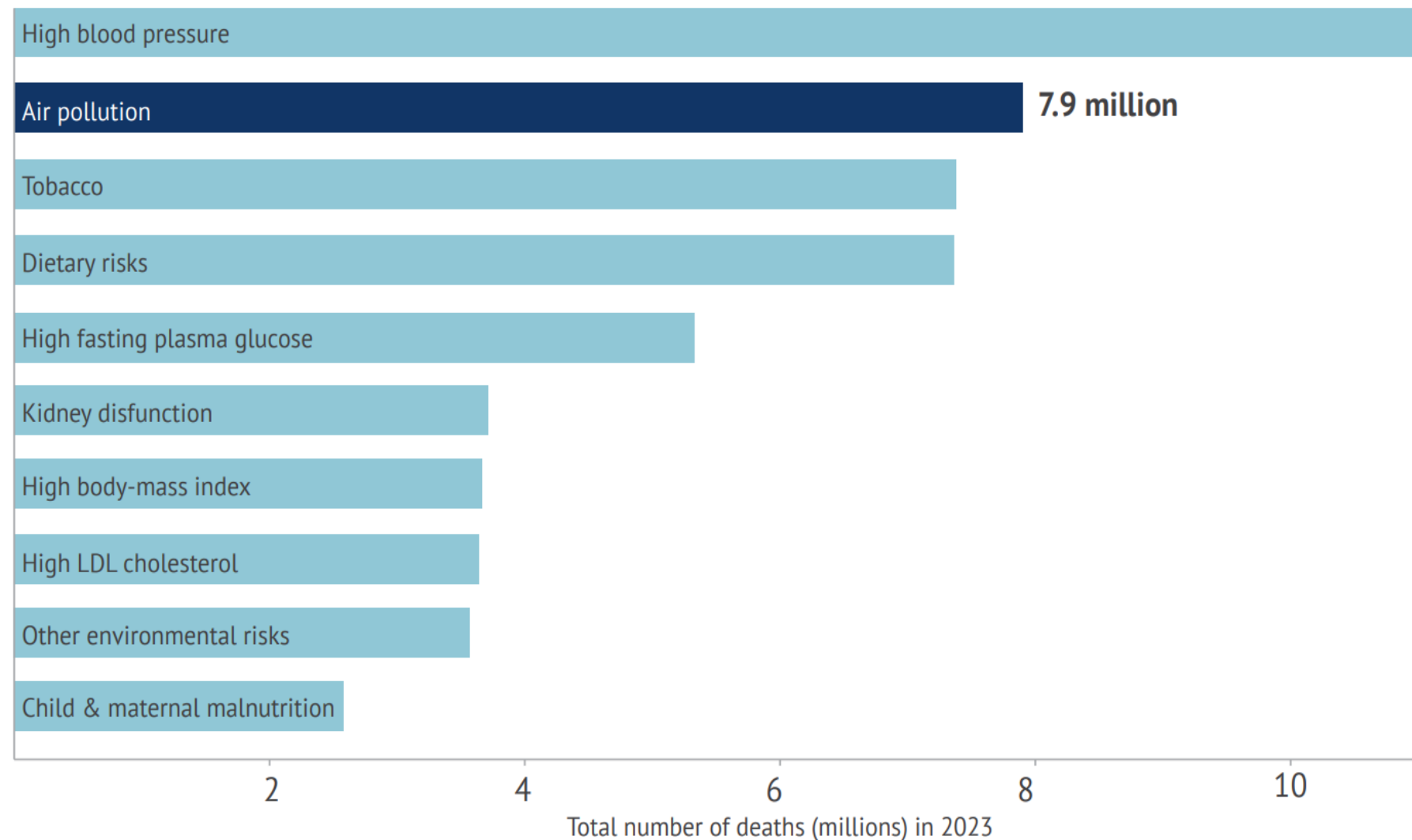
International Centre for  
Integrated Mountain  
Development



**Rebecca Garland**

University  
of Pretoria

# The big picture: air pollution's toll in 2023



**7.9 million**  
*global deaths in 2023*

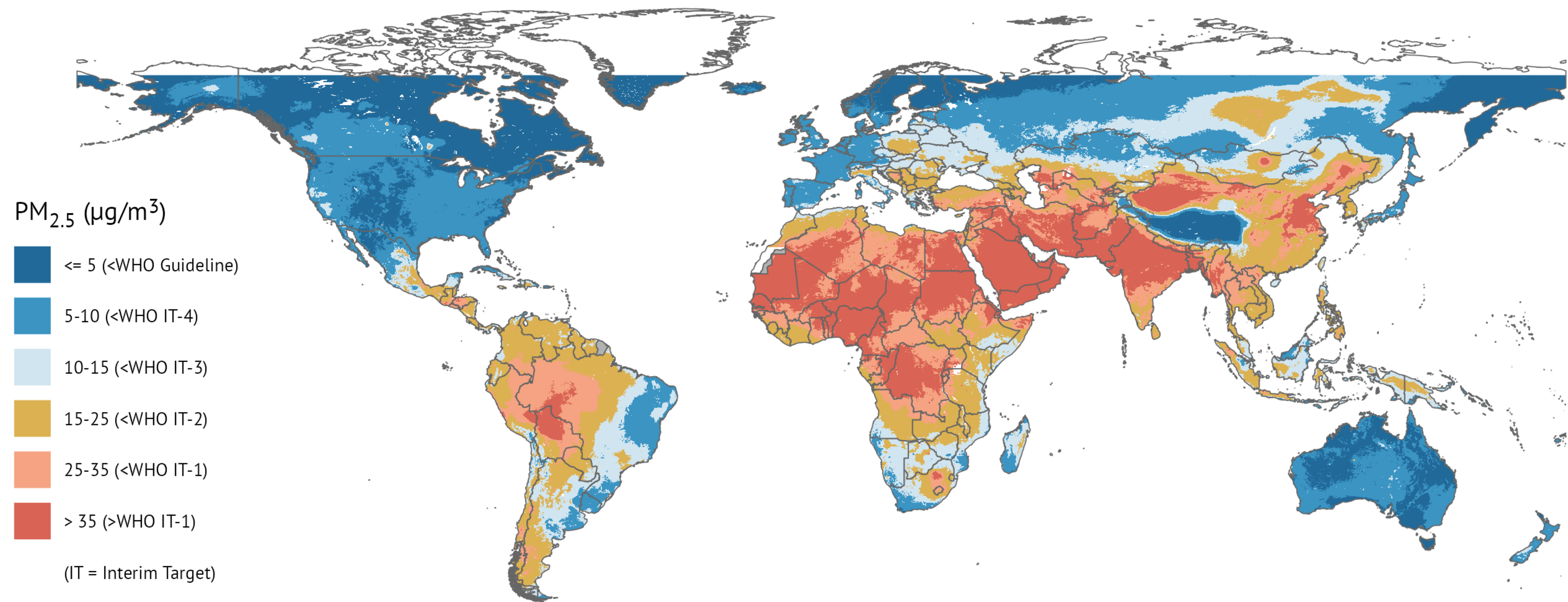
**676,000** deaths  
*in children under 5 years of age*

**86%** of air pollution deaths  
*attributable to noncommunicable diseases*

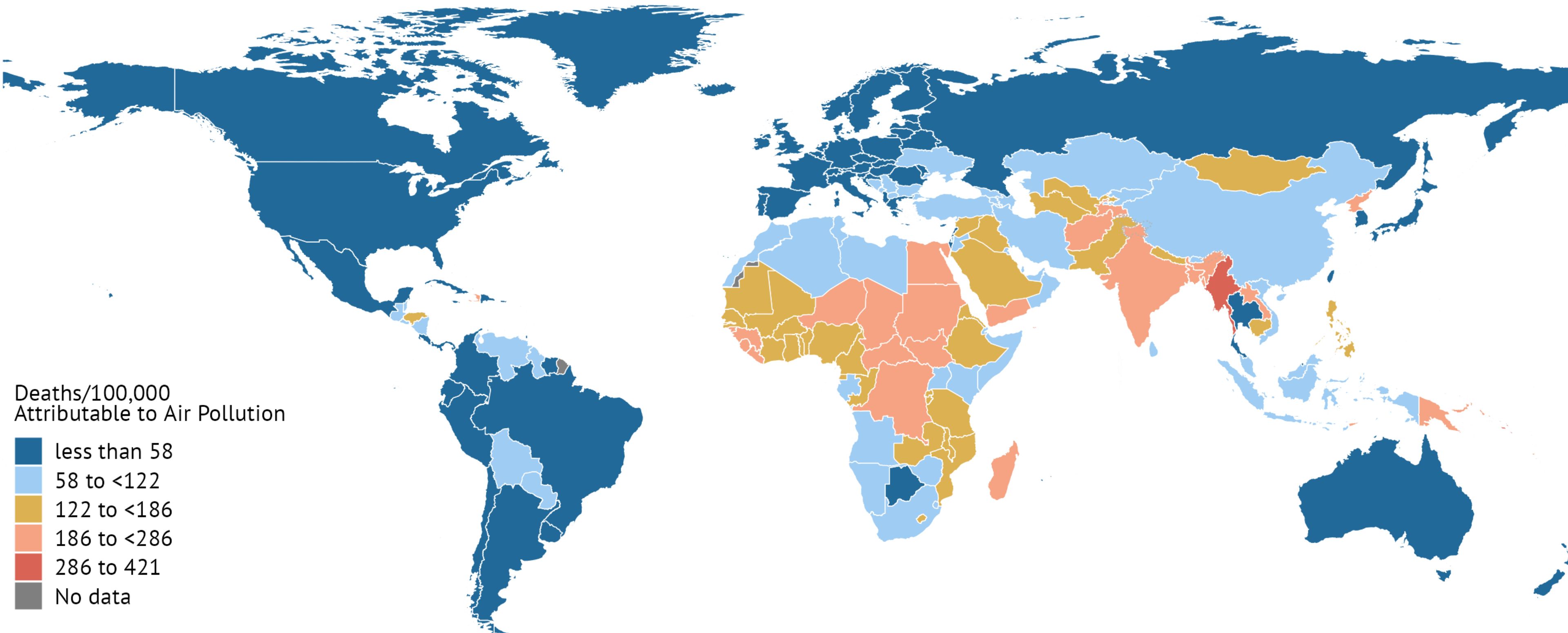
**600,000+** deaths  
*due to dementia linked to air pollution*

**90%** of air pollution deaths  
*in low and middle income countries*

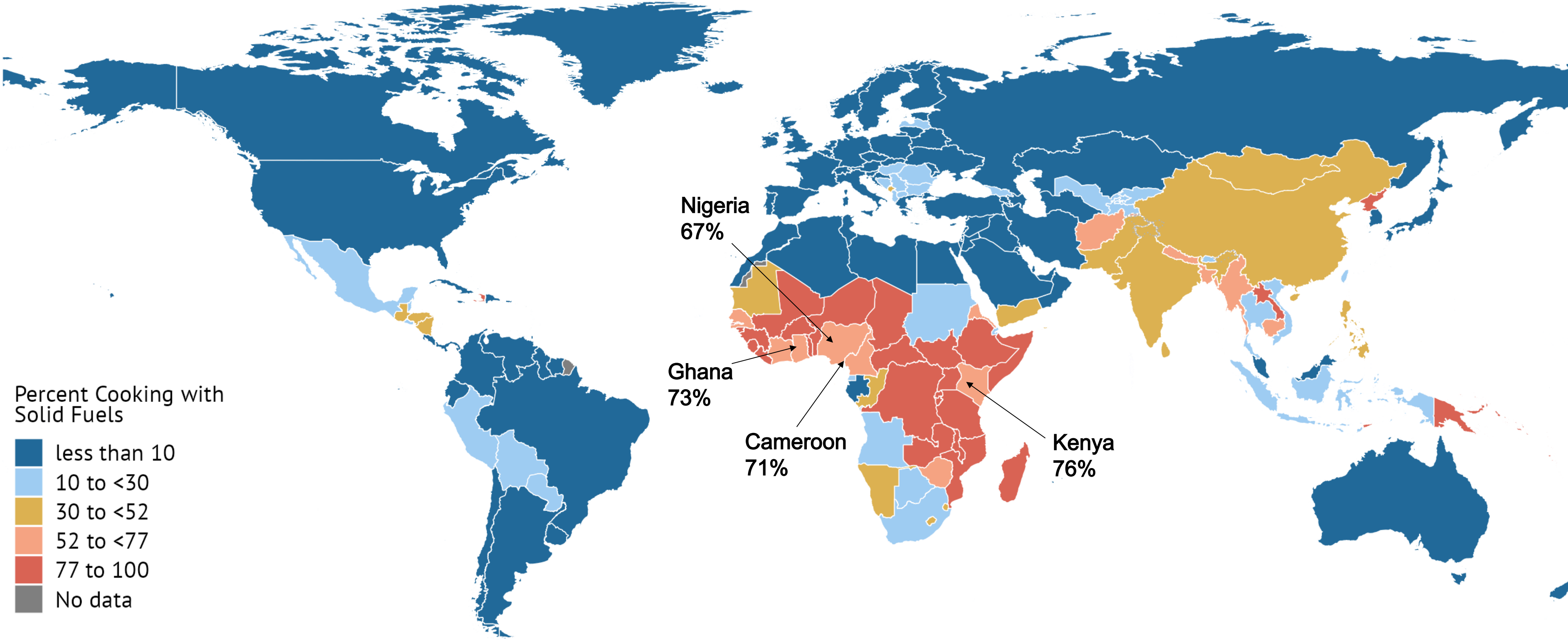
**5-10x**  
*Higher death rates in LMICs compared to high income countries*



**36%** of the world's population is exposed to **PM<sub>2.5</sub>** above the least stringent WHO Interim Target of 35 µg/m<sup>3</sup>



The number of deaths linked to ambient  $PM_{2.5}$  and ozone exposures have increased worldwide in the last two decades. Africa and Asia experience the largest



Steep reductions in the global burden from household air pollution, but exposure to household air pollution remains high in Africa, and South Asia.

Actions taken to improve air quality especially in key sectors, including energy, transport, and residential fuel use — can bring **health benefits** (e.g., fewer hospitalizations, improved birth outcomes, and a reduced number of dementia cases) while producing **healthcare savings and improving quality.**



MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2026

# Global Progress Towards Air Quality Action and its Impacts

SESSION  
CHAIR

PANEL  
MODERATOR



**Kiros Berhane**  
Columbia  
University



**Pallavi Pant**  
Head of Global  
Initiatives, HEI

SPEAKERS &  
PANELISTS



**Maria Neira**

Former Director, WHO &  
Senior Fellow, Clean  
Air Fund



**Forrest Robinette**

Independent  
Consultant



**Jordi Pon**

UNEP



**Ashish Tiwari**

International Centre for  
Integrated Mountain  
Development



**Rebecca Garland**

University  
of Pretoria