

## **RICARDO VARGAS**

The *Air Quality Unit* belongs to the *General Directorate of Sustainability and Climate Change* within the *Regional Ministry of Environment, Urban Planning and Sustainability* of the **Community of Madrid**. Among other tasks, this unit deals with the drafting and the coordination of plans, projects, reports and studies that have an impact on the atmosphere, the acoustic environment and the climate change. The Air Quality Unit is responsible for managing the [Air Quality network](#) of the **Community of Madrid**, formed by 24 individual measuring stations located throughout the territory of the region with the exception of Madrid municipality, which has its own network.

The information provided by the measuring stations allows the unit to undertake actions and design measures so that the aims established in the [Regional Strategy of Air Quality and Climate Change \(Plan Azul+\)](#) can be achieved. This information is also used to calculate the [Air Quality Index](#), available to the public in the website of the Community of Madrid. This permits citizens to consult, at a glance, the level of pollutants and the situation of the air quality in any of these stations.

The Air Quality Unit is in charge of preparing and reporting the annual [Regional Emissions Inventory](#), where the emissions coming from different pollutant sources located in the region of Madrid are evaluated, taking into account removals of CO<sub>2</sub> by sinks.

This Unit takes part in some working groups that are coordinated by the Ministry for Ecological Transition, focused on the Emission Trading System (ETS), the air quality, the noise or the adaptation on climate change, as well as European projects related to these matters. This way, the Air Quality Unit participates in **VEG GAP project**, as a member of its Advisory Board. The findings of VEG-GAP project will be very helpful to implement some measures included in the [Plan Azul+](#), such as *Reforestation actions in the Community of Madrid*, which consists in creating green corridors in order to stop desertification and increase resilience by undertaking reforestation actions in urban and peri-urban areas.

The ultimate aim is to improve the air quality within the region of Madrid and to prevent or reduce emissions coming from activities with a high pollution potential in order to achieve the national and international standards.