

Cancun, 9 December 2010

To: UNFCCC National focal points

Concerning: Input to international climate talks in Cancun, 29 November - 10 December 2010

Dear Sir/Madam,

What's good for climate change is good for health AND the economy

Strengthen the health dimension in current UNFCCC negotiating text

A side event organised by the WHO and the Mexican government (Wednesday) stressed the devastating impacts which climate change will bring to human health and wellbeing. It also emphasised the massive benefits to health (and healthcare costs) which mitigating measures bring. This was reiterated yesterday at Recent evidence backs-up these views (e.g. IPPC, The Lancet report, HCWH/HEAL Report, WHO).

Leading health organizations Health Care Without Harm (HCWH), Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) and Climate and Health Council (CHC), together with some of the world's largest medical, nursing and health organizations are calling on world leaders to take bold action to address climate change. They stress that failure to do so will result in widespread suffering and death.

However, leaders should be encouraged. Bold action to reduce GHG emissions saves lives, and also money as healthcare costs plummet. The Lancet reports demonstrated that such benefits applied worldwide- to India, China and the UK for example. Meanwhile, HEAL/ HCWH demonstrate the benefits of moving the EU greenhouse gas emissions reduction target from 20% to 30% domestically by 2020 (compared to 1990 levels). This would cost €46 billion per year in 2020 (1, 2) but save <€30.5 billion annually (2) though reduced medical bills or ill-health avoided, in addition to the <€52 billion health gains associated with the current 20% target. Equivalent to just under 0.2% of EU GDP, this would meet nearly 2/3 of the cost of reaching the 30% internal target. A healthy workforce increases economic productivity. Negotiators might consider the fact that low carbon lifestyles improve health and wealth.

We therefore call on negotiators to:

- *Ensure that health is in the Shared Vision paper*

Justification: Article 1, paragraph 1 of the UNFCCC Convention (1992), says that health should be alongside environment and socioeconomic development

- *Health has effective interventions for adaptation, so it should be mentioned in the Adaptation section of the official text The positive and negative impacts of mitigation actions should be recalled as criteria for mitigation measures*

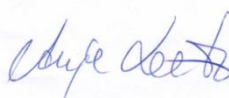
Justification: Article 4.1 (8) of the UNFCCC Convention (1992) says that mitigation measures should assess health implications.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that health becomes a cornerstone of international and EU climate change policy.

Sincerely,



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Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)



Anja Leetz
Executive Director
Health Care Without Harm Europe (HCWHE)



Mike Gill
Co-chair
Climate and Health Council (CHC)