



CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE CHALLENGES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH: ENGAGING THE REGIONS

Date: 24 June 2008

Place: Committee of the Regions, Rue Belliard, 99-101, Brussels, Belgium

Climate change is the leading public health challenge of the 21st century. Climate related extreme weather events, flooding, droughts, and temperature changes already put severe pressure on health systems. To avoid the worst of these effects Europe needs to take action now.

Through local adaptation and mitigation initiatives European regions are ideally placed to reduce vulnerability to future climate change and also take advantage of the co-benefits to health of measures to curb greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), such as increased exercise, reduced air, water and noise pollution and fewer accidents and injuries. That's why the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) and European REGIONal Local Health Authorities (EUREGHA) network, supported by the Committee of the Regions (CoR), and the Veneto and the North West of England regions, are co-organising this one day conference on health, climate change and regional engagement.

The specific purposes of the conference are to:

- Outline the European and international climate change policy framework
- Increase understanding of the health risks of climate change
- Showcase regional adaptation and mitigation initiatives and empower local institutions to take action on climate change and simultaneously protect health
- Debate climate policy recommendations

Target audience: local and regional environment and health authorities, the public health community (health professionals, patient groups, and health care managers), international, EU and national policy-makers; and interested NGOs.

PROGRAMME:

09:00 Welcome and Introduction

- Francesco Ronfini, Chair, European REGIONal Local Health Authorities (EUREGHA)
- Genon Jensen, Executive Director, Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)

09:15 Health and Climate Change Policy Opportunities

Facilitator: Christian Farrar-Hockley, Senior Policy Advisor, Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)

This session will discuss the proposed European climate and energy package, the need for future EU leadership in post 2012 climate negotiations, and how health considerations can strengthen these efforts.

- Dr. Nicola Notaro, Policy Coordinator, European Commission, Directorate General for Environment
EC Climate Change Policy and Public Health Considerations
- Dr. Franz Karcher, Health Threats Unit, European Commission, Directorate General for Public Health
Climate Change and Health

10:15 Health Impacts of Climate Change

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This session will discuss the health effects of global warming and WHO action to put health at the centre climate change.

- Dr Bettina Menne, World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for Europe
Protecting health in Europe from climate change

Presentation of EUREGHA/HEAL Good Practice Awards (Bettina Menne, World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Office for Europe)

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 Local Authorities: Mitigating & Adapting to Climate Change

The panel sessions in this part of the programme will look at what local and regional health and environment authorities are doing, or what they can do, to adapt to climate change and mitigate its effects whilst protecting health.

PANEL I – Regional Health Friendly Mitigation Strategies

Facilitator: Genon Jensen Executive Director, Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)

- *Climate change and health good practice award – winning mitigation project*
Richard Boyd, Disability Essex
- Pirita Lindholm, AMICA – Climate Alliance
Local climate change policies and health
- Maria Arnold, UK Sustainable Development Commission
The NHS as a Good Corporate Citizen
- Jan Falconer, Strategist, Aberdeen City Council
Climate Change and the Challenges for Public Health in Aberdeen City

13:00 Lunch

14:00 PANEL II – Regional Health Friendly Adaptation Strategies

Facilitator: Monika Danuta Kosińska, General Secretary, European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)

- *Climate change and health good practice award – winning adaptation project*
András Oláh, Tatabánya, Hungary
Launch of a local Heat-and UV-alert Plan in Tatabánya, Hungary to set an example for other cities to follow
- Dr Tommaso Torrigiani Malaspina, University of Tuscany, Italy
The Meteo Salute Project “Biometeo for Health”, informing on and tackling weather related environmental health effects
- Andrea Rossa, Regional Agency for the Protection of the Environment, Veneto (ARPAV), Italy
Heat waves forecasts in the Veneto Region, Italy
- Maria Karagiannidou, 3rd Regional Health Authority, Macedonia, Greece
Health strategies for fighting heat wave in Central Macedonia, Greece

15:30 Coffee Break

15:45 - 17:00 PANEL III – Taking Action on Climate Change and Health: HEAL and EUREGHA perspectives and conference recommendations

- Chris White, Vice Chair, EUropean REGIONal Local Health Authorities (EUREGHA)
EUREGHA Perspectives and conference recommendations
- Christian Farrar-Hockley, Senior Policy Officer, Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)
Climate Change and Health HEAL Perspectives

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