



Resolution

REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

EM/RC64/R.3
October 2017

Sixty-fourth Session
Agenda item 3(b)

Climate change and health: a framework for action

The Regional Committee,

Having reviewed the technical discussion paper on climate change and health: a framework for action¹;

Recalling resolutions WHA61.19 and EM/RC55/R.8 on climate change and health and EM/RC60/R.5 on the regional strategy on health and the environment (2014–2019);

Recalling also the outcomes of the second Global Conference on Health and Climate which set key actions for the implementation of the Paris agreement to reduce health risks linked to climate change, and the Marrakech Ministerial Declaration on Health, Environment and Climate Change (2016);

Concerned that, in some countries of the Region, health systems are still not resilient to climate change;

Recognizing the leadership role of ministries of health in governance, regulation and surveillance of health, as well as in triggering necessary actions and interventions by other related sectors to protect health from climate change and environmental risks;

1. **ENDORSES** the framework for action on climate change and health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (2017–2021) (annexed to this resolution);
2. **REQUESTS** the Director-General to include the adoption of the Marrakech Ministerial Declaration on Health, Environment and Climate Change as an agenda item for the 143rd session of the Executive Board;
3. **CALLS ON** Member States to:
 - 3.1 Designate and empower a national health and climate change focal point to facilitate and coordinate the development of the public health response to climate change;
 - 3.2 Increase climate resilience of health systems, including through integration of surveillance, early warning systems and management of the impact of climate change on health outcomes;

¹ EM/RC64/4

- 3.3 Ensure support for health and climate action through engaging the health community, relevant sectors and other stakeholders in mitigation and adaptation of climate change;

4. REQUESTS the Regional Director to:

- 4.1. Provide technical support to Member States to develop national frameworks for action on climate-resilient health systems and to implement country-specific national public health response to climate change;
- 4.2. Build partnerships with United Nations organizations and other relevant stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of the framework for action on climate change and health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (2017–2021);
- 4.3. Convene a regional consultation on health and the environment, with focus on climate change and air pollution, as well as implementation of the regional framework with participation from national health and environment authorities;
- 4.4. Report to the Regional Committee on the progress achieved in the implementation of the regional framework for action on climate change and health at its sixty-sixth and sixty-eighth sessions.

Annex 1. Proposed framework for action on climate change and health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Strategic response target	Action by countries	WHO support
Governance, policy and engagement for health protection from climate change		
Governance	Establish a specific responsibility and accountability legal mechanism within the ministry of health for protecting health from climate change within and outside the health sector	Provide training and institutional capacity-building to designated health and climate focal point entities
A focal point on health and climate change is assigned responsibility for facilitating and coordinating the development of the public health response to climate change	Designate a national health and climate focal point with clearly defined terms of reference and budgetary allocation to coordinate the health sector response to climate change	Share relative modalities, experiences and lessons learned from other Member States with designated health and climate focal point entities
Policy	Institute a coordination modality for the health and climate focal point entity to steer the development and implementation of the public health response to climate change.	
A national policy and action plan on health and climate change are developed and integrated with the national public health strategy and policy.	Develop a national policy, strategy and action plan on health and climate change	Share guidelines, strategies, experiences and lessons learned from other Member States on developing a national policy and action plan on health and climate change
	Integrate the health and climate change policy and action plan into the national public health strategy and policy.	
Engagement	Integrate the national health and climate change policy and action plan into the national climate change policy and action plans on climate change adaptation and mitigation	Share guidelines, strategies, experiences and lessons learned from other Member States on developing a national cross-sectoral collaboration mechanism on health and climate change
The national health and climate change policy and action plan are well-integrated into the national climate change policy and action plans for climate adaptation and mitigation	Adequately represent the ministry of health in the main climate change processes at all levels (e.g. UNFCCC meetings, Conference of the Parties negotiations and national communications)	
The designated national health and climate focal point is a member of the national delegation to the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC	Conclude agreements between the ministry of health and other ministries (of health-determining sectors), delineating specific roles and responsibilities in assessing the health impacts and benefits of climate change adaptation and mitigation policies	
Health impact assessments of climate adaptation and mitigation measures are conducted within three health-determining sectors		
Climate resilient health systems – robust surveillance, early warning and response		
Surveillance and health information systems:	Undertake assessment of health vulnerability to climate change and evaluate the existing response and adaptation options within the health sector (i.e. vulnerability and adaptation assessments)	Provide training and institutional capacity-building on climate risks, monitoring and surveillance, early warning, and vulnerability and adaptation assessments
Assessment of health vulnerability to climate change is completed and updated biennially with emerging evidence	Enhance disease surveillance, link with environmental monitoring and develop climate-based early warning systems	Share relevant health information system modalities development from other Member States
The health information system encompasses the health and climate change vulnerability and response data	Expand the geographic, population and seasonal coverage of health surveillance and control programmes for climate-sensitive diseases	
Early warning system on climate health risks is established		

Strategic response target	Action by countries	WHO support
<p>Response and health programmes:</p> <p>The strategic plans and operating procedures of national health programmes are revised to respond to climate risks</p>	<p>Update the strategic plans of national health programmes on climate-sensitive diseases, taking into account the outcome of the health vulnerability assessment</p> <p>Revise standard operating procedures within the public health system to respond to climate risks by providing health programme interventions</p>	<p>Share awareness-raising materials, norms and standards, and interventions regarding health and climate issues</p>
<p>Response and health workforce:</p> <p>70% of the ministry of health workforce in climate-sensitive health programmes are trained on health impacts and response to climate change</p>	<p>Develop human resources capacity via educational curricula and professional training of health personnel to ensure sufficient number of health workers are equipped to deal with the health risks posed by climate change</p> <p>Strengthen organizational preparedness capacity, with contingency planning for deployment and response (at national, provincial and local levels) in the case of acute climate shocks and crises, such as extreme weather events (e.g. flooding, drought, heat waves, etc.) and consequent outbreaks</p>	<p>Provide guidance on developing and delivering educational curricula and professional training of health personnel on health and climate change</p> <p>Share experiences, norms and standards, and planning regarding health and climate responses</p> <p>Provide training modules and capacity-building for health system preparedness and response to climate change</p>
<p>Contingency plans are developed to respond to climate shock events</p>	<p>Assess systematically the vulnerability of health facilities and infrastructure in light of climate risk forecasts</p>	<p>Share specifications, norms and standards for climate-resilient health care facilities.</p>
<p>Response and health infrastructure and technologies:</p>	<p>National assessment on the climate resilience of health infrastructures is generated</p> <p>National standards and building codes for health infrastructure and technologies are revised in view of climate vulnerability</p> <p>50% of health care facilities are equipped with climate-proofed infrastructure and supporting services</p>	<p>Provide guidance on greening the health sector</p> <p>Facilitate networking with global initiatives (e.g. Health Care Without Harm)</p>
<p>Enhanced management of environmental health interventions</p>	<p>Regulatory and surveillance roles of the ministry of health in the management of environmental health:</p> <p>Health evidence database is generated to support development of national regulations on the management of environmental health services (e.g. water supply, sanitation, food safety, etc.)</p>	<p>Collect and analyse information on environmental hazards and health outcomes</p> <p>Connect and integrate the monitoring and evaluation programmes of environmental risks with the health surveillance systems</p>
<p>Public health protection and promotion are well-streamlined within national regulations and policies on environmental health services and determinants</p> <p>Surveillance role of the ministry of health is strengthened in the integrated management of environmental health services and determinants</p>	<p>Improved national regulations and policies on key environmental health services and determinants (e.g. drinking water, air quality, food system, housing, transport, energy, waste management, health facilities) are promulgated to ensure health protection and promotion while addressing climate change</p> <p>Maintain independent surveillance by the ministry of health to evaluate effectiveness, compliance and health impacts of the environmental health services managed by other sectors (such as drinking water, sanitation, food safety, management of chemicals, etc.)</p>	<p>Share international/regional experiences, norms and standards on integrating climatic, meteorological and environmental monitoring and evaluation programmes with health surveillance systems</p>
<p>Mobilizing support for the public health response to climate change</p>	<p>Mobilization</p> <p>Financial and human resources are secured to protect health from climate change</p>	<p>Share international/regional networking and experiences on mobilizing national resources to protect health from climate change in the health and other sectors</p> <p>Provide consultation to decision-makers and training and capacity-building development programmes to relevant professional staff</p>

Strategic response target	Action by countries	WHO support
Financial and human resources are available to the health sector to carry out health impact and co-benefit analyses of climate action options in health-determining sectors	to health	
International funding mechanisms (e.g. Green Climate Fund) are accessed to conduct health-based adaptation measures and mitigation projects	Facilitate access to international funding opportunities and mechanisms (e.g. Green Climate Fund) for dissemination towards health-based adaptation measures and mitigation projects, including nationally determined contributions	Share international/regional networking and proposals for mobilizing funds from international monetary mechanisms
