

25 - 29 MARCH 2018

Documentation of the Work of the World Health Organization (WHO)



Conference B

World Health Organization (WHO)

Committee Staff

Director	Andrea Jacoby
Chair	Jasmin Brown

Agenda

- I. Mitigating the Health Impacts of Pollution
- II. Vaccination to Promote Global Public Health
- III. Improving Responses and Coordination in Addressing Mental Health

Resolutions adopted by the Committee

Code	Торіс	Vote
WHO/1/1	Mitigating the Health Impacts of Pollution	Adopted without a vote
WHO/1/2	Mitigating the Health Impacts of Pollution	Adopted without a vote
WHO/1/3	Mitigating the Health Impacts of Pollution	25 votes in favor, 0 votes against, 0 abstentions

Summary Report

The World Health Organization (WHO) held its annual session to consider the following agenda items:

- I. Mitigating the Health Impacts of Pollution
- II. Improving Responses and Coordination in Addressing Mental Health
- III. Vaccination to Promote Global Public Health

The session was attended by representatives of 25 Member States.

On Sunday, the committee adopted the agenda of I, III, II, beginning discussion on the topic of "Mitigating the Health Impacts of Pollution." By Tuesday, the Dais received a total of four proposals covering a wide range of subtopics including improving the work of advisory bodies, telemedicine and air quality measurements. The delegates also discussed strengthening and expanding frameworks and policies regarding pollution, as well as the improvement of fecal waste management and increased NGO cooperation to improve health following natural disasters. The body worked diligently to ensure every voice was heard and included in order to create strong working papers.

On Wednesday, three draft resolutions had been approved by the Dais, none of which had amendments. The committee adopted three resolutions following voting procedure, two of which received unanimous support by the body. The resolutions represented a wide range of issues, including WHO Emergency Operations Department's Global Health Cluster network, expansion of the eHealth Technical Advisory Group (eTag), and safe disposal and management of waste to prevent the spread of disease. The body was very eager to get to work on the imperative topic of reducing the health impacts caused by pollution. Delegates remained on task and driven and showed fantastic diplomatic skills and consensus.



Code: WHO 1/1

Committee: World Health Organization

Topic: Mitigating the Health Impacts of Pollution

The World Health Organization,

Referencing General Assembly resolution 70/1 Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015), especially Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3 and 17, in which all bodies of the United Nations (UN) emphasize good health well-being and partnership,

Reinforcing that pollution is not just a gradual process but that it also can occur in forms that are sudden and unpredictable, such as oil spills, volcanic eruptions, and unpredicted waste dumping, as discussed in the 2017 United Nations Environment Assembly report Toward a Pollution-Free Planet,

 Acknowledging Economic and Social Council resolution 2017/14 "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations", which emphasizes the importance of strengthening Member States' partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGO), such as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), in providing timely humanitarian responses and supporting long-term, sustainable capacity-building,

Understanding the importance of the partnership between the IFRC and National Societies, the former of which is responsible for outlining a common approach responding to pollution of air, water, and soil pollution emergencies in which human health is greatly impacted, such as the Global Water and Sanitation Initiative,

Recognizing the resources and credibility of WHO Collaboration Centers, which organize and coordinate training courses, maintain health databases and inform research-based practices,

1. *Encourages* fellow Member States that have not done so already to join the WHO Emergency Operations Department's Global Health Cluster network, which ensures predictable and accountable humanitarian emergency response by coordinating international organizations, NGOs, academic institutions, specialized agencies and donors by:

a. Identifying and advising how to address disparities in technical knowledge and relevant national health policy;

b. Providing advocacy resources crucial to mobilizing financial and political support for humanitarian aid crisis response;

c. Facilitating information and technical exchange between Member States' and stakeholders party to the Global Health Cluster;

2. *Recommends* the strengthening of the partnerships between WHO and IFRC in coordinating timely responses to exacerbated conditions of air, soil, and water pollution caused by natural and man-made disasters by:

 Coordinating with the IFRC and local NGOs to facilitate the creation of timelines for response and the setting of clear and realistic goals;

b. Ensuring that the IFRC training of WHO Emergency Medical Teams are trained to adhere to WHO best practices to protect human health against air, soil, and water pollution pertaining to the:

 Distribution of IFRC water and sanitation disaster response kits that conform to WHO standards of each individual having access to 15 liters of water per day and access to safe water disposal; ii. Testing and grading of potential drinking water sources, utilizing the Rapid Assessment of
 Drinking-Water Quality;
 iii. Adherences to the reasonable particulate matter guideline by the WHO guidelines for indoor

quality;

c. Conducting reviews of individual IFRC National Societies' disaster management public health training programs with the permission of the IFRC to determine the extent to which training for WHO guidelines for air, soil, and water pollution are being met;

3. *Proclaims* that the partnership between WHO and IFRC shall facilitate the sharing of information on symptoms and best practices on alleviating symptoms of pollution-caused diseases and illnesses for private citizens, utilizing the database within the WHO Collaboration Centre;

- 4. *Reaffirms* the partnership between WHO and IFRC and collaboration under the WHO Collaboration Centre to work under the close supervision by the WHO Guidelines Review Committee as well as the Ethics Review Committee in which these committees are assuring that workers for the IFRC and their efforts are following WHO guidelines;
- 5. *Requests* further cooperation between WHO and local NGOs in promoting future coordination in addressing health complications resulting from crisis-related environmental health risks.



Code: WHO/1/2

Committee: World Health Organization

Topic: Mitigating the Health Impacts of Pollution

The World Health Organization,

Noting with satisfaction General Assembly resolution 70/1 Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2017), in particular Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3, which emphasizes the need to reduce illnesses caused by pollution, Goal 6, which seeks to attain higher health standards by improving water quality and reducing pollution, and Goal 17, which aims for stronger commitment, partnership, and cooperation to mitigate the health impacts of pollution,

Considering the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (1972) and Preventing Disease Through Healthy Environments (2016), which proclaim that a human's well-being is correlated to the conditions of their environment and the need to work multilaterally with Member States to ensure the health of humanity worldwide,

Reaffirming the body's responsibility to protect vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant women, elderly people and malnourished people, as defined by the WHO's *Environmental health in emergencies* (2018),

Expressing, the need for strong local, national and international environmental policies and regulatory frameworks, which are essential for the shift towards sustainable development and improved health, as reaffirmed by the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (2015),

Upholding current projects being implemented by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), private-public partnerships such as the World Bank's Pollution Management and Environmental Health (PMEH) program, and governmental organizations such as the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF), that aim to improve and protect human health through reducing human contact with harmful pollutants in air, water and soil,

Taking into consideration World Health Assembly resolution 68.18, "Health and the Environment: Addressing the Health Impacts of Air Pollution", which highlights the importance of linking health statistics to data on levels and sources of air pollution in order to connect relevant sectors through information sharing on efforts to simultaneously reduce air pollution and promote health,

Recommending that Member States model a regionally-tailored policy such as the Malé Declaration on Control and Prevention of Air Pollution and Its Likely Transboundary Effects for South Asia (1998), which links pollution sources to adverse health effects while guiding solutions to mitigate health impacts, and can be used as a model for regional-specific legislation for the adverse health effects on specific regions,

Emphasizing the WHO Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030, which encourages Member States to adopt policy that promotes the successful use of community health workers within primary care and their role in educating and engaging with local populations with cultural competence,

Considering information sharing through expanding eHealth, defined by World Health Assembly resolution 58.28 "eHealth", which outlines the importance of telemedicine, as a globally developing and significant tool in aiding Member States with limited access to health service, between the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the WHO to achieve best practices at the local, national, and international levels to mitigate health impacts of pollution,

Noting with satisfaction the success of the United Nations Statistical Databases (UNSD) in collecting detailed reports from national and regional actors for full understanding of emissions and pollutants affecting each region, to track and predict future environmental threats on health to both rural and urban communities,

Observing the WHO Air Quality Guidelines for Particulate Matter, Ozone, Nitrogen Dioxide and Sulfur Dioxide (2006) and recognizing the Ambient Air Pollution assessment (2016), which emphasizes particulate matter (PM) prevention in order to achieve sustainable air quality to reduce risks of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases such as, heart attack, stroke and lung inflammation,

Welcoming multilateral cooperation through existing international legislation, as seen in The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), which pursues a viable solution to eliminating trade barriers that encumber the timely procurement of essential medicines that satisfy the priorities of populations' identified health needs, including those created by environmental factors, specifically pollution,

1. *Suggests* the expansion of the eHealth Technical Advisory Group to include mitigating the health impacts of pollution as a priority for the collection and distribution information from voluntary contributions of Member States, nongovernmental organizations, and regional frameworks;

2. *Further suggests* the distribution and implementation of knowledge and relevant environmental and medical expertise while considering Member States' unique needs to transition towards increased standards of health by:

a. Encouraging the application of telemedicine, such as the International Society for Telemedicine and eHealth, to facilitate the diagnosis, treatment and proper care of populations experiencing cardiovascular and respiratory diseases caused by PM exposure through:

i. Enabling remote health care facilities, such as hospitals in urban or rural areas, located in regions highly at risk of PM exposure, in accordance with WHO air quality standards and regulations, to network and receive medical training and advice from cross site medical professionals;

 ii. Alerting national agencies, WHO, Global Health Observatory (GHO), the Joint Task Force on the Health Aspects of Air Pollution, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, and Nature Conservation agencies, of high PM exposure levels;

iii. Proposing comprehensive regulations and encouraging Member State legislation to enable patient rights and maintain patient confidentiality in accordance to the International Health Regulations (2005);

b. Suggesting the expansion of WHO's Institutional Repository for Information Sharing to facilitate a network of knowledge exchange amongst medical professionals, data scientists, environmentalists and others with relevant expertise on the impact of pollution on human health;

3. Recommends expanding eHealth to improve the accessibility to Member States by promoting the partnership of ITU and WHO with the technical and financial support of the World Bank, regional banks, and public-private partnerships with academia and research centers, using Geographic Information System (GIS) organizations which are GIS-action and Mappt, which provide services at no cost to NGOs and Member States for real-time observation and evaluation of the spread of disease caused by pollution and according to Databases of Air Quality Index (AQI) and WASH;

4. *Further recommends* the effective improvement of existing data collection infrastructures, such as the UNSD to be utilized by local hospitals, communities, and organizations by:

a. Encouraging proper responses to environmental pollutants on national and local levels through:

 Voluntary sharing of information to international systems to prescribe best practices that are regionally tailored by forwarding the collected data to public institutions;

ii. Direct sharing of collected data with hospitals and healthcare institutions through the telemedicine platform, which would keep in mind the pertinence of patient confidentiality as defined by WHO in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948);

iii. Initiating collaboration between local private and public healthcare facilities;

- iv. Promoting information awareness to local community leaders to encourage members to seek healthcare services; b. Providing resources and services such as: i. The Health and Environment Linkages Initiatives (HELI) led by WHO and UNEP, which endorses actions in developing states to mitigate health impacts caused by pollution with activities such as pilot projects and improvement of tools for decision-making, WASH, a collaborative initiative between WHO and UNICEF that improves water and ii. sanitation services which reduces water-borne illnesses caused by pollution; iii. The Climate and Air Coalition, consisting of voluntary partnerships between governments, intergovernmental organizations, businesses, scientific institutions and civil society organizations, which focuses on protecting the climate and decreasing air pollution;
 - 5. Suggests Member States expand research on understanding regional-specific circumstances, such as the aforementioned Malé Declaration, due to the impacts of air, water and soil pollution with specific evaluations that:

- Occur in multiple phases over an established time interval of 5-10 years to ensure that positive health trends from mitigating pollution improve on a continuous scale;
- b. Emphasize the importance of voluntary political commitment, with emphasis to preserving Member States' citizens' health through understanding of regionally tailored knowledge;
- c. Collect and create information specific to Member States' own circumstances regarding the following:
 - Cataloguing specific health issues that result from various forms of pollution in regional blocs:
 - ii. Assessment of both local and regional sources that contribute to pollutants and their negative health impacts for all Member States;
 - iii. How to implement accurate and comprehensive monitoring systems for tracking air, water and soil pollution in real time;
 - iv. State risk factors of each Member State that result in worsening of health due to pollution;
- 6. *Encourages* Member States, in cooperation with the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation as well as WASH, to improve existing data collection, local distribution of water management processes and sanitation services. Also, the safe disposal of human urine and feces, through implementing Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) as a means of achieving the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment, limiting the health effects of pollution through:
 - a. Regularly collecting and monitoring data, through the JMP and WASH, as well as assessing water quality status, alerting authorities when pollutants enter the water supply;
 - b. Funding from assessed contributions from Member States, as well as voluntary contributions from the World Bank and regional banks in capacity for planning IWRMs and their participation processes, acknowledging that it is a Member State's responsibility to provide clean water to its citizens in order to limit health impacts arising from contamination;
- 7. *Recommends* Member States to strengthen policies and serve vulnerable populations by using tools such as the High-Level Political Forum Voluntary National Review, which tracks progress on the SDGs to mobilize international NGO coordination by:
 - a. Inviting Member States to consider WASH to improve water sanitation for the lack of adequate infrastructure and universal access to clean water;

- 160 b. Encouraging Member States to develop policies that prevent soil pollution and regulate waste 161 management according to the formulated guidelines of the Intergovernmental Technical Panel on Soil 162 fostered by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN and also informed by research collected by the Global E-Waste Monitor, which tracks soil pollutants; 163 164 165 c. Promoting the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to raise awareness on ambient and household air 166 pollution as a major cause for non-communicable diseases (NCDs); 167 168 8. Further Recommends finding solutions to reduce NCDs caused by pollutants on a local level by encouraging 169 Member States to promote a healthy community by: 170 171
 - a. Using data collected from eHealth and relaying it to local communities to make Member States aware of NCDs caused by pollutants such as smoke particles or gases harmful to human health;
 - b. Supporting preventive measures such as informing the public through awareness campaigns and eHealth to teach them the impacts of air pollution on health;
 - Keeping in mind WHO PM regulations such as:

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- daily or annual mean air quality measurements of PM particle concentrations per cubic meter i. of air volume;
- ii. reporting particle concentrations to governments and other concerned agencies;
- reduction of annual average particle concentration to the WHO guideline level of 20 µg/m3, iii. as proposed in "WHO Air Quality Guidelines for Particulate Matter, Ozone, Nitrogen Dioxide and Sulfur Dioxide":
- Analyzing the health needs of Member States and the health risks recorded by the GHO, which is a database that provides access to an international interactive repository of health statistics;
- Encourages Member States to develop, and train local community health workers to educate communities on mitigating the health impacts of pollution through:
 - Education regarding household air pollution in rural communities regarding various evidence based practices, such as clean stove cooking and reducing soil pollution by transitioning towards sustainable cultivation and farming;
 - b. Utilization of the AQI to inform urban populations of dangerous levels of air pollution and their potential negative health effects;
 - Emphasis of high standards on hygiene and sanitation as established by WHO guidelines;
 - d. Building comprehensive and precise criteria of selecting professionals by introducing and referencing from enterprises to qualify our working system to be professional and high-efficient;
 - Informing citizens on prevention and management of illnesses that arise from water contamination;
- 10. Suggests the implementation of infrastructures that has the capacity to accommodate for rising rates of urbanization, which also focus on healthy environments for communities considering the WHO report on Health as the Pulse of the New Urban Agenda, which states the importance of urban planning for reducing both communicable and non-communicable diseases with:
 - Strategic planting of flora and introduction of fauna in urban and peri-urban areas to reduce the concentration of ambient air pollution, the burden of disease from stroke, heart disease, lung cancer and both chronic and acute respiratory diseases;

- b. Improved storm water management through environmentally sustainable infrastructure programs such as permeable pavements, rain gardens and rooftop disconnection to filter out harmful sediments and pollutants before they reach waterways thus reducing community susceptibility to waterborne illnesses;
 - 11. *Expresses hope* that Member States which have not already adopted the Protocol Amending the TRIPS Agreement to do so by the 31 December 2019 deadline and to note its value in aiding the protection and treatment of peoples affected by pollution emphasizing the commitment of Member States to engage in comprehensive trade negotiation.



Code: WHO/1/3

Committee: World Health Organization

Topic: Mitigating the Health Impacts of Pollution

The World Health Organization,

Reaffirming the United Nations (UN) General Assembly's decision in 2010 to declare access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right through the adoption of UN General Assembly resolution 64/292 "The Human Right to Water and Sanitation," which calls upon international agencies, such as Water for Good, Blue Planet Network, and Pure Water for the World, to assist Member States in providing safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation,

Recognizing that 12.7 million lives are lost each year due to the impact of air, water, and soil pollution, as stated in the 2016 WHO report, "Preventing Disease Through Healthy Environments: A Global Assessment of the Burden of Disease from Environmental Risk,"

Acknowledging that the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (1972) has prioritized the importance of protecting individuals from damaging health impacts resulting from pollution, specifically under principle one, which recognizes a human's wellbeing is directly related to the conditions of their environment,

Noting that 892 million people worldwide still practice open defecation, as found in the 2017 WHO Fact Sheet in regard to Sanitation, in places such as street gutters, behind bushes or into open bodies of water, which contribute to the spreading of infectious diseases such as Cholera, Tuberculosis, and E Coli,

Drawing attention to imminent threats that pollution poses to the global landscape as well as the valuable implementation of UN General Assembly resolution 70/1 Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015) with specific reference to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15, which refers to: sustainably managing forests, combating desertification, halting and reversing land degradation, as well as halting biodiversity, which are impertinent in maintaining our land in reference to issues such as acid rain, evaporation and crop yield, clogged agricultural drainage ways and a lack of efficient sewage run off, which contribute to food scarcity, malnutrition, hindered growth, and deaths as a result of e. coli,

 Recommending the further implementation of General Assembly resolution 64/292 "The human right to water and sanitation" (2010), as well as Goal 3, Target 9; Goal 6, Target 1; Goal 6, Targets 1 and 3; Goal 11, Target 6; and Goal 12, Target 4 of the SDGs, and the UN-Water's report "Progress on Drinking, Sanitation, and Hygiene" to address the detrimental health impacts of anthropogenic pollution; including: prenatal growth, human development, diarrhea, cholera, dysentery, typhoid, hepatitis A, and polio,

Noting the importance of engaging the public and private sectors when sharing information and research of new technologies that help prevent and address water pollution, such as the conference titled Fighting Climate Change: Sharing Italy's Innovative Technology that convened on April 12, 2016, which worked towards tackling the issue of rising sea levels that lead to new health challenges such as water transferred diseases,

1. Suggests Member States and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) promote world health globally by:

a. Adopting an adjunct summit under the name of the World Health Organization of Transboundary Effective Reconstruction (WATER) to the International High-Level Conference on International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018-2028, to be held from 20 to 22 June 2018 in Dushanbe:

i. Meeting at WATER summit to discuss UN's water programs, with the aim of gathering experts from Member States, the private sector, and NGOs to share techniques and practices; Addressing the health impacts of water pollution, as exemplified at the conference titled

- Fighting Climate Change: Sharing Italy's Innovative Technology;
- b. Continuing as collaborative and effective proponent to fight against water pollution and dehydration, as exemplified by Charity: water, and WaterAid's partnership with Member States;
- 2. *Encourages* Member States to empower the private and public sectors, such as the World Banks' Karnataka Urban Water Supply Improvement Project to provide relief for vulnerable groups facing the detrimental impacts of pollution by:
 - a. Assisting pregnant women, elderly people, children, and those enduring persistent chronic illnesses by inviting Member States to consider promotion of technologies that will allow these communities to know when and how to seek treatment;
 - Recognizing the variety of individual circumstances and the importance of providing care specific to
 the needs of each individual by increasing awareness of pollution levels at any given time, through
 increased production of pamphlets, such as those distributed by the United Nations Children's Fund in
 post-disaster situations;
- 3. *Invites* Member States to provide best practice-sharing methods to assist Member States' populations whose health and livelihoods are affected by polluted water due to rising sea levels by building mobile barriers, such as MOSE, an innovative technology used to combat flooding and the mixing of black water and clean water;
- 4. *Suggests* Member States improve the treatment process of fecal waste and provide safe disposal management to prevent the spread of parasitic infections and to reduce the risk of exposure to bacteria, protozoa, and viruses that can lead to diarrhea, liver problems, and in some cases death, through:
 - a. Increasing awareness of health issues related to unsanitary treatment of fecal waste, as exemplified by Pure Water for the World, an NGO which educates and provides resources to families exposed to the effects of improper sanitation;
 - b. Improving coordination with NGOs as they combat health issues that present themselves due to water pollution, as exemplified by partnerships between Member States and the World Toilet Organization, which aims to spread awareness about toilets and the sanitation crisis;
 - c. Developing a partnership with AQUASTAT, a Food and Agriculture Organization system to redirect fecal matter into a reusable soil material;
- 5. *Expresses its hope* for NGOs to expand upon and coordinate with The United Nations Disaster Assessment Coordination Disaster Response Preparedness Missions to provide education and training materials on a regular and ongoing basis to Member States that are likely to experience natural disasters engendered by pollution;
- 6. *Endorses* providing a stronger foundation for system protection and process control including microbial and chemical water quality monitoring through the global Water and Sanitation Program to place emphasis on the safety and cleanliness of drinking water for human use;
- 7. Welcomes research from Member States, funding from the World Bank, and policy frameworks from NGOs to improve water sanitation and monitoring methods as well as alleviating the potential health issues resulting from pollution, through:
 - a. Fine-tuning existent tools such as the Water Quality Index from within those Member States with existing institutions, such as the National Water Research Institute by Environment Canada, which has a preestablished focus on water pollution and its impact on health;

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 104 b. Reporting progress on development of sanitation and monitoring methods within Member States to the WHO.