



## 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.

### DRAFT PROGRAMME:

**09:00**

#### **Welcome**

Secretary General Committee of the Regions

**09:15**

#### **Health and Climate Change Policy Opportunities**

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.

Speakers:

- Stavros Dimas, Commissioner for the Environment (TBC)
- MEP Climate change committee (TBC)
- Prof. Jacqueline McGlade EEA Executive Director (TBC)

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**10:30 Health Impacts of Climate Change**

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

Speakers:

- Dr Roberto Bertollini, Special Adviser on Climate Change World Health Organisation (TBC)

**11:00 Coffee Break**

**11:15 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: Monika Danuta Kosińska European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) General Secretary (TBC)

- Climate change and health good practice award – winning mitigation project
- Sustainable transport and health
- Reducing the carbon imprint and energy use of the health care sector

**13:00 Lunch**

**14:00 PANEL II – Regional Health Friendly Adaptation Strategies**

Facilitator: Franklin Apfel, Managing Director World Health Communication Associates Ltd (TBC)

- Climate change and health good practice award – winning adaptation project
- Regional heat wave/flood plans
- Communicating climate change

**15:30 Coffee Break**

**15:45 PANEL III – Coordinating Regional Action on Climate Change and Health**

- ICLEI Climate and Air projects – Gino Van Begin, Regional Director for Europe, ICLEI (TBC)
- EUROCITIES climate change and air quality work, Alfons Finkers, Chair for the EUROCITIES Climate Change - Air Quality - Energy Efficiency Working Group (TBC)

**17:00 Closing Remarks and Policy Recommendations**