



EUROPE

Regional Committee for Europe Sixtieth session

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Resolution

The future of the European environment and health process

The Regional Committee,

Recalling its resolutions EUR/RC49/R4 and EUR/RC54/R3 on Environment and health, which endorsed the outcomes of the Third and Fourth Ministerial Conferences on Environment and Health, held in London in 1999 and in Budapest in 2004, respectively;

Recognizing that high priority should be given to achieving an environment conducive to health for all, particularly children and other vulnerable groups, in the European Region of WHO;

Appreciating the progress made towards achieving this aim over the past 20 years through the European environment and health process (EEHP), supported by the work of the WHO Regional Office for Europe and steered by the European Environment and Health Committee (EEHC) in partnership with Member States, bodies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, as well as the European Commission;

Acknowledging the need to continue and strengthen the EEHP, which will continue to make a major contribution to the health of people in the WHO European Region in the 21st century, especially by reducing the burden of noncommunicable, infectious and chronic diseases attributable to current and emerging environmental risk factors;

1. EXPRESSES ITS GRATITUDE to the EEHC for its role in steering the environment and health process in the WHO European Region in the past;
2. EXPRESSES ITS GRATITUDE to the Italian Government and the Municipality of Parma for hosting the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in Parma from 10 to 12 March 2010 and for their organizational and financial contribution to it;
3. EXPRESSES ITS GRATITUDE to the WHO Regional Office for Europe for its role in the successful organization of the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health and as the secretariat of the EEHP since 1989, and in particular for the technical work of its European Centre for Environment and Health (with offices in Rome and Bonn) in providing expertise and assistance to Member States and other stakeholders and partners with the implementation of the commitments made through the EEHP and the series of ministerial conferences on environment and health;
4. ENDORSES the decisions of the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, as included in the Parma Declaration on Environment and Health and the working paper entitled *The European Environment and Health Process (2010–2016): Institutional framework*;¹
5. WELCOMES the support for the EEHP and the Parma commitments expressed through the Declaration of the European Commission and the Parma Youth Declaration;
6. RECOGNIZES the need to establish effective mechanisms for coordinating technical and financial collaboration across sectors, among countries and among all stakeholders and partners, in order to stimulate legislative and institutional reforms, strengthen countries' capacities and effectively reduce exposures to environmental hazards, while focusing on those activities that will deliver a substantial added benefit to the region without duplicating activities and resources;
7. RECOGNIZES the need to provide an adequate political profile and leadership to the EEHP;
8. ENDORSES the establishment, as set out in *The European Environment and Health Process (2010–2016): Institutional framework*, of:

¹ Document EUR/55934/7,
http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0016/104443/Parma_EH_Conf_edoc07.pdf.

- (a) the European Environment and Health Task Force (EHTF) as the leading international intersectoral body for implementation and monitoring of the EEHP; and
- (b) the European Environment and Health Ministerial Board (EHMB), which will be the political face and driving force of international policies in the field of environment and health for implementation of the commitments made within the EEHP;

9. REQUESTS the EHMB and EHTF to convene according to the schedule endorsed at the Fifth Ministerial Conference and the EHMB to report annually to the WHO Regional Committee for Europe and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Environmental Policy on achievements and areas needing greater efforts, as well as on the EHMB's and EHTF's activities, work plans and financial requirements;

10. URGES Member States² to:

- (a) make every effort, in cooperation with all other stakeholders and partners, to realize the commitments agreed upon at the Fifth Ministerial Conference;
- (b) pay particular attention to achieving the five measurable targets set out in the Parma Declaration on Environment and Health and the Commitment to Act;
- (c) act on the key environment and health challenges of our time, which include:
 - (i) the health and environmental impacts of climate change and related policies;
 - (ii) the health risks to children and other vulnerable groups posed by poor environmental, working and living conditions (especially the lack of water and sanitation);
 - (iii) socioeconomic and gender inequalities in the human environment and health, amplified by the financial crisis;
 - (iv) the burden of noncommunicable diseases, in particular to the extent that it can be reduced through adequate policies in areas such as urban development, transport, food safety and nutrition, and living and working environments;
 - (v) concerns raised by persistent, endocrine-disrupting and bio-accumulating harmful chemicals and (nano)particles, and by novel and emerging issues;

² And, where applicable, regional economic integration organizations

- (vi) insufficient resources in parts of the WHO European Region;
- (d) set up or strengthen existing mechanisms or structures that can ensure effective implementation, promote local actions and ensure active participation in the EEHP, foster strategic partnerships and networks and ensure that youth participation is facilitated across all Member States at both national and international levels;
- (e) intensify efforts to develop, improve and implement health and environmental legislation and to continue health system reforms as necessary, particularly in the newly independent states and countries of south-eastern Europe, aimed at streamlining, upgrading and strengthening the performance of public health and environmental services;
- (f) advocate for and invest in sustainable and environmentally friendly and health-promoting technologies, emphasizing the opportunities created by these activities, such as energy-efficient health services and green jobs;
- (g) share in providing the necessary financial support to the WHO Regional Office for Europe's environment and health activities, and in particular to the WHO European Centre for Environment and Health;

11. REQUESTS the Regional Director to:

- (a) continue to support implementation of the decisions taken at previous ministerial conferences on environment and health, and in particular the Protocol on Water and Health to the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, and the Charter on Transport, Environment and Health, as developed in the joint WHO-UNECE Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme;
- (b) continue to provide leadership to the EEHP by further promoting the Regional Office's and country offices' activities in relation to environment and health, with special attention to vulnerable population groups and particularly addressing the social and gender inequalities in environment and health;
- (c) pay special attention to fostering strategic partnerships and networks, so that environment and health issues are better integrated across the policies of all sectors;
- (d) continue to act as secretariat of the EEHP as set out in the Parma Declaration and *The European Environment and Health Process (2010–2016): Institutional*

framework and, for that purpose, to provide the necessary human, financial and organizational resources and capacity;

- (e) mobilize international resources to support country implementation of the decisions taken at the Parma Conference.