



PRESS RELEASE

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The medical profession urges to focus on sustainable prophylactic policies to secure global health

Health Day at the UN Climate Change Conference COP 16 in Cancun

Health and Environment communities join forces and call on negotiators to consider the “real costs” of climate change and the benefits of strong action by taking the human health dimension into account.

The “**Cancun Climate and Health Statement**” was endorsed by ten organisations representing millions of health professionals worldwide, including the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) and the World Medical Association (WMA)¹. The Statement was launched yesterday by Dr Michael Wilks, CPME Past President and climate change Rapporteur, during the Health Day at COP 16, Cancun, Mexico.

“Overwhelming evidence exists that reducing greenhouse gases benefits not just health but countries’ economies. These “co-benefits” provide all those attending Cancun with a powerful and unifying new narrative – reducing greenhouse gases is good for your health, and for your budget”, Dr Michael Wilks said.

CPME thus reaffirms its position stated in **CPME 2009/021 Final** and emphasizes the enormous direct and indirect impacts of climate change on health, for example:

- the increase in air pollutants and subsequent augment in respiratory disease
- the migration of pollens causing prolonged and new allergies
- the spread of infectious diseases
- the increase of heat waves and their consequences especially in the elderly, children and pregnant women.

Climate change will increasingly impact the health of people both in industrialised and developing countries, thus undermining efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals².

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¹ The Cancun Climate and Health Statement is co-signed by ten organisations : Climate and Health Council, International Federation of Medical Students’ Association, Health and Environment Alliance, Health Care Without Harm, International Council of Nurses, International Society of Doctors for the Environment, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Standing Committee of European Doctors, World Federation of Public Health Associations and World Medical Association. It has also been endorsed by Richard Horton, Editor, The Lancet, and Fiona Godlee, Editor, British Medical Journal.

² <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>