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WHO briefs for parliamentarians

BAQ 2023

Ambition to Action: Clean air for health and the climate

Dr Akeem Ali, Head, WHO Asia-Pacific Centre for Environment and Health
15 November 2023, Manila

WHO briefs for parliamentarians on realizing the co-benefits of action on climate and the environment

Purpose: To inform parliamentarians about the health co-benefits from addressing climate change and environmental issues

Expectations:

- Immediate action
- Long-term vision
- Community focus

How you can contribute:

- **Engagement:** actively participate in discussions and initiatives focusing on climate change, environment, and health
- **Collaboration:** work together with stakeholders to implement cross-sectoral strategies that address these interconnected challenges
- **Communication:** share and disseminate the information within your networks to broaden impact

WHO briefs for parliamentarians on realizing the co-benefits of action on climate and the environment

WHO Asia-Pacific Centre for Environment and Health has launched a new series of briefs for Parliamentarians on the co-benefits of action on climate change and the environment.

Briefs are available on topics such as:

- Air pollution
- Chemical safety
- Climate change
- Climate-resilient and environmentally Sustainable Primary Health care facilities
- Water, sanitation and hygiene in healthcare facilities



WHO briefs for parliamentarians on realizing the co-benefits of action on climate and the environment

QR code for Parliamentary Briefs



Each brief includes:

- Talking points
- Concrete actions
- Examples of co-benefits including cost saving and improved health outcomes
- Win-wins for other sectors and economic progress

WHO parliamentary brief - Air Pollution



FIVE BENEFITS FOR HEALTH

- 1 Improved outdoor air quality – reducing the current 1.6 million deaths per year in the Western Pacific.
- 2 Improved household air quality – reducing the 475 000 deaths per year in the Western Pacific.
- 3 Reduced incidence of stroke, heart disease, chronic and acute respiratory diseases, lung cancer, low birth weight and stillbirths.
- 4 Reduced health inequities and effect on social determinants of health.
- 5 Increased physical activity.

FIVE “WIN-WINS” FOR OTHER SECTORS AND SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS

- 1 Reduce emissions associated with household solid fuel combustion.
- 2 Reduce emissions from fossil fuel consumption and other sources of outdoor pollution.
- 3 Contribute to sustainable development, including poverty alleviation and social and economic outcomes for women and girls.
- 4 Improve energy efficiency and access to clean energy.
- 5 Reduce economic costs – health costs of air pollution are estimated to absorb 7.4% of global GDP.

OTHER SECTORS THAT MAY BE INVOLVED



WHO parliamentary brief - Air Pollution

Key reasons for immediate action:

- 2 million deaths in the Western Pacific in 2019 from ambient and household air pollution
- 99% of the global population breathe air exceeding WHO limits
- Many air pollutants contribute to climate change

Actions for parliamentarians to consider

Lawmaking:

- Be informed about legal frameworks for AQ
- Advocate for legislation aligning with WHO guidelines and interventions supporting clean energy transition

Representation and Leadership:

- Understand and communicate the health risks of air pollution to constituents
- Promote govt leadership in energy efficiency
- Engage in regional and global dialogues on AQ

Budgeting:

- Prioritize activities with potential health co-benefits
- Redirect funds from polluting subsidies to clean energy incentives

Oversight and accountability:

- Ensure governance mechanisms to mitigate industry manipulation (e.g. creation of anti-corruption agencies)
- Mandate responsible entities to provide updates to parliament