

Compendium of WHO and other UN guidance on health and environment



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Preface

Environmental pollution and other environmental risks cause almost a quarter of the worldwide disease burden. To eliminate or at least substantially reduce this disease burden and to address the challenges in health, environment and climate change being faced, bold preventive action at national, regional, local and sector-specific level is needed. Policy-makers and other actors are increasingly prepared to take action on health and the environment, often as a result of requests by citizens and organizations, and need to be supported by adequate resources.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and various other United Nations (UN) organizations offer guidance on effective actions on health and the environment distributed over hundreds of different reports. This compendium consists of a systematic compilation of WHO and other UN guidance that addresses all major areas of health and the environment into one resource. Unlike regular reports, this compendium presents a database or repository extracting the relevant guidance for policy-makers and other key target audiences on health and the environment and refers to the original reports if more detail is needed.

This compendium supports the strategic objectives and their implementation at country-level of the WHO Global Strategy on Health, Environment and Climate Change to scale up action on health determinants in all policies and in all sectors for health protection and improvement. It further supports the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to address environmental risks through a shift towards primary preventive actions and the promotion of healthy choices.

In publishing this compendium, WHO seeks to assist policy-makers and other actors in countries to take actions to improve the health of people and the environment and reduce health inequities and provide assistance with implementation of norms and solutions. It does this by summarizing in one resource the most crucial policy recommendations to improve health and reduce the disease burden coming from environmental risks; it further provides guidance on the ways in which policy-makers and other actors can raise awareness of the risks being faced and the healthy practices people can take to reduce them.

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