

WHO at the heart of the health response to climate change, air pollution and energy poverty

Global plan to promote coordinated advocacy, communication and partnerships, 2025–2028



In May 2025, Member States at the Seventy-eighth World Health Assembly adopted the first-ever *Global Action Plan (GAP) on Climate Change and Health (2025–2028)*, in response to the Seventy-seventh World Health Assembly resolution WHA77.14 (2024). This historic decision recognizes climate change as a global health crisis, with human-induced climate change leading to extreme weather events, disease outbreaks and the undermining of health systems and determinants. Despite this, funding remains inadequate, and the disconnect between air quality and climate change policy and health has left populations vulnerable and misses opportunities for creating a healthier, more sustainable future.

In response, the Global Action Plan provides a strategic framework to protect populations from climate-related health risks, strengthen health systems, and ensure that health is integrated into global and national climate policy and financing.

The plan also builds on the WHA 68/18 resolution on addressing the health impact of air pollution (2015), and the updated Roadmap, which among other crucial mandates, calls for fostering policy dialogue, partnerships, and strengthen multisectoral cooperation taking into account WHO global air quality guidelines, as well as raise awareness in the public and among stakeholders of the impacts of air pollution on health and opportunities to reduce or avoid exposure.

To translate this high-level mandate into action, WHO has developed the *Advocacy, Communications and Partnerships Plan (2025–2028)*. This ensures that the commitments set out in the Global Action Plan are matched with practical strategies to build momentum, unite diverse stakeholders, and deliver lasting health and climate benefits.

7M+
deaths annually
from air pollution

~5%
of global greenhouse
gas emissions from
health systems

0.5%
of multilateral climate
finance allocated to
health projects

Strategic approach

The four strategic areas of this plan set out where coordinated advocacy, communications and partnerships can add the most value in supporting GAP delivery. Each area corresponds to a distinct function: consolidating WHO's leadership role in global processes; building the awareness and narratives that support political and public action; extending WHO's reach through cross-sectoral and financing partnerships; and ensuring the health sector itself leads by example. Together, they are intended to reinforce one another – political visibility creates space for country action, country action generates evidence, and evidence strengthens the case for sustained investment.

1

Consolidate WHO's role as a global leader in climate change, air quality, energy and health

WHO will continue to serve as the trusted global authority on climate and health. The plan sets out mechanisms to shape international policy, provide technical guidance, and convene diverse stakeholders. Initiatives such as the Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH) and the work of the WHO–WMO Joint Office for Climate and Health ensure coherence across sectors and create platforms where governments, civil society, and partners can align efforts. Guidance on integrating health into national plans (such as providing Quality criteria for integrating health into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)) supports Member States and communities to deliver on climate change and health commitments.

2

Build awareness and advocacy across the climate, energy and health sector to enable strategic action to promote decision-making at global, national, and local levels

Effective communication is central to reframing climate action as a health opportunity. Strategic initiatives such as 'Beat the Heat', "BreatheLife" and 'Save 2 Million Lives' mobilize health workers, amplify lived experiences, and translate evidence into compelling messages. By equipping health professionals and communities with advocacy tools, and amplifying the technical work of WHO, WHO aims to build a broad-based movement that translates activity to communications that support ambitious climate and health policies.

3

Expand multi-sectoral engagement

Climate change, air pollution, energy and health cannot be addressed in isolation. WHO is building partnerships with sectors beyond health – including finance, energy, security, urban planning, and humanitarian action – supported in part by the work of the WHO Director-General Special Envoy on Climate Change and Health, Dr Vanessa Kerry. By highlighting the economic and social co-benefits of climate action, WHO will deepen engagement with funders, multilateral institutions, and private sector actors to increase investment in climate and health. This cross-sectoral approach also strengthens WHO's voice in high-level political spaces such as the G7 and G20, and continues the relationship with COP presidencies to integrate health as a key aspect of climate negotiations.

4

Strengthen health sector climate-resilience and sustainability

As countries commit to net-zero and climate-resilient health systems, WHO will lead by example. The plan outlines a WHO Secretariat roadmap to achieve net-zero by 2030 and supports Member States in implementing the Operational framework for building climate resilient and low carbon health systems. Sharing knowledge through ATACH and other platforms will help accelerate progress and showcase case studies of success.