

THE PARIS PLATFORM FOR HEALTHY ENERGY



The United Nations Climate Conference in Paris represents an opportunity for health professionals and organizations from across the globe to join forces and support a transition to clean, renewable energy. This essential shift can at once reduce climate change's myriad impacts and protect public health from fossil fuel-generated pollution.

Such a transition is made imperative by the fact that fossil fuels pose a double burden on human health, significantly contributing to both local environmental pollution and global climate change. They are a major source of ambient (outdoor) air pollution, which was responsible for approximately 3.7 million premature deaths in 2012 – more than HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined. The extraction and burning of fossil fuels is also responsible for the majority of greenhouse gas emissions – such as carbon dioxide, methane and black carbon – that contribute to climate change, which *the Lancet* has called the greatest global health threat of the 21st century.

As health professionals and public health advocates, we recognize that:

- The use of fossil fuels contributes significantly to ill health and premature death around the world by polluting the environment while also warming the earth.
- Reducing dependence on fossil fuels, particularly coal, and transitioning to clean, renewable energy sources, creates an opportunity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while immediately protecting and improving public health in every country.
- Developed countries are responsible for the greatest historical share of fossil fuel emissions, and developing countries, which bear far less responsibility for the problem, have the right to sustainable development.
- Energy access is critical to improving health outcomes, and to meet the world's growing energy needs we must prioritize clean, renewable, healthy energy sources and energy efficiency over dirty, fossil fuel-based sources.
- There is an urgent need to implement the recommendations of the 2015 *Lancet* Commission on Health and Climate Change, which calls on governments to rapidly phase out coal from the global energy mix, and to rapidly expand access to renewable energy in low- and middle-income countries.

We therefore commit ourselves and call on our colleagues in the health sector to:

- Facilitate education, conversation, and action on the health impacts of energy choices in our institutions, communities, and countries.
- Advocate for health impact assessments and health economic evaluations to be integrated in decision-making on energy projects and energy policy.
- Where our institutions have financial resources invested in the market, consider divesting these resources from fossil fuels.
- Lead by example by investing in clean energy solutions in health offices, health centers, hospitals, and health systems, and by using health care's purchasing power to decarbonize the health care supply chain.

Furthermore, we call on local and national governments as well as international institutions to:

- Cease the deadly and costly dependence on fossil fuels by eliminating fossil fuel subsidies, avoiding new coal projects, and phasing out coal-fired power generation.
- Prioritize and finance development based on clean, renewable energy sources in order to protect public health.
- Reach an international agreement that fosters the transition to clean, renewable energy by, in part, transferring technical and financial resources to countries least able to make this transition.
- Invite greater health sector participation in energy and climate decision-making at all levels of governance.
- Require health impact assessments to be conducted by qualified experts as a part of statutory requirements for the permitting and siting of new energy projects.
- Include considerations for health impacts, as well as health costs and benefits, in policy, legal, and financial decision-making on energy projects.

As representatives of the health sector, we believe that by addressing the health impacts of energy choices, our communities, countries, and the entire world can achieve better, more cost effective, and more equitable health outcomes, together with universal energy access and a healthy climate. ■

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ABOUT THE PARIS PLATFORM FOR HEALTHY ENERGY

The Paris Platform for Healthy Energy is a statement representing the health sector's commitment to leadership and advocacy for clean, renewable, healthy energy choices in order to protect public health. A project of the Healthy Energy Initiative, the Platform is intended to serve as a guiding document — in the lead up to, during, and beyond the 2015 United Nations Climate Conference in Paris — for the health sector's efforts to mobilize globally and in key countries to advocate for healthy energy.

ENDORSEMENTS

43 health organizations active in over 80 countries on every continent have endorsed the Paris Platform for Healthy Energy as of November 25, 2015. These include national public health and medical associations from Australia, Brazil, Canada, India, the Philippines, South Africa, Spain, the UK, the US, and more.

A sample of endorsing organizations:



Public Health Association
AUSTRALIA



**FACULTY OF
PUBLIC HEALTH**
(United Kingdom)



Public Health Association
of South Africa



**PUBLIC
HEALTH
FOUNDATION
OF INDIA**



SESA
SOCIEDAD ESPAÑOLA
DE SANIDAD AMBIENTAL
Spanish Society of Environmental Health



Canadian Public Health Association

The lead endorsers of the Platform are Health Care Without Harm, the World Federation of Public Health Associations, the Climate and Health Alliance (Australia), and the Health and Environment Alliance (Europe).



**CLIMATE AND
HEALTH
ALLIANCE**



Health and
Environment
Alliance



The Platform is also supported by the World Medical Association and endorsed by its senior leadership.



ENDORSE THE PLATFORM

We invite endorsements from both organizations and individuals in the health sector. Learn more and submit your endorsement at: www.healthyenergyinitiative.org/platform