

## **NAP Expo, 9 June 2013, statement by the WHO**

In addition to the coverage of health within the UNFCCC, countries have also specifically requested support on health adaptation to climate change through the highest global health body - a Resolution at the World Health Assembly. At the most recent Assembly, held in Geneva last month, Member States requested a renewal and expansion of support for health adaptation.

This global mandate is now reinforced and made more practical through regional frameworks for action covering all countries of the world. Important progress has been made in all regions, for example, with support for strategy development and adaptation planning across the WHO European region, and completion of health vulnerability and adaptation assessments throughout the Pacific Islands. While we are aiming for global coverage in our support for health adaptation, the first priority is the Least Developed Countries and the Small Island Developing States.

To take the important example of Africa, WHO has worked with UNEP to support a Health and Environment Interministerial Process across the continent. This has agreed a Framework for Public Health Adaptation to Climate Change, formally adopted by African ministers of health at the WHO Regional Committee for Africa in September 2011, and at the African Conference of Environmental Ministers in the same year. Responding to the requests of Member States, WHO, in collaboration with partners, prepared a 5-year Plan of Action (2012-2016) for public health adaptation to climate change in Africa, which has now been endorsed by 38 member states. One of the requirements for implementation of this plan is the preparation of national action plans, to tailor and guide adaptation interventions to country specific situations. The preparation of these plans will also contribute the health component to the National Adaptation Planning process, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

With generous support from the government of Norway, WHO is now working actively to support adaptation planning in the health sector, while at the same time ensuring coherence with the NAPs process. WHO has held a first inter-country workshop in Namibia in December 2012 to support 10 countries of Eastern and Southern Africa to prepare their plans. An additional workshop will be held in Libreville, Gabon, this month, to support an additional 36 countries to complete this exercise and initiate resource mobilization and implementation. Invited participants to these workshops include national experts one from the Ministry of Health and the climate change focal point from the Ministry of Environment. WHO is now beginning planning to implement equivalent workshops for non-African LDCs before the end of the year.

WHO is therefore fully committed to play its role in mobilizing the health sector to address the risks of climate change. Furthermore, we wish to emphasize both the importance of health in the NAPs process and the fact that health NAPs should be an integral part of the NAPs process which is why we are very glad to sit on this table with fellow agencies and organization. Additionally, as this was highlighted as a concern, we wish to highlight that we have as a guiding principle the integration of health adaptation to climate change into national health planning processes. We look forward to working with Parties, Member States, other organizations, and civil society, to achieve our common goal through the Global Support Program.