

First Inter-Ministerial Conference on Health and Environment in Africa

From 26-29 August, the first Inter-Ministerial Conference on Health and Environment in Africa will be hosted by the Government of Gabon, with WHO and UNEP as co-organizers. This landmark conference will explore ways to address health and environment priorities and linkages and enhance political commitment required to reduce environmental threats to health. The outcome of the conference will be formalized in a "Libreville Declaration."

Please visit: <http://www.unep.org/health%2Denv/>

Health and Environment Linkages Initiative Toolkit to be Launched at the Inter-Ministerial Conference in Gabon

The Health and Environment Linkages Initiative report, "Managing the Linkages for Sustainable Development, a Toolkit for Decision-Makers" is being launched by WHO and UNEP. The Toolkit offers a country-focused approach for policy-makers in multiple sectors to identify development strategies and management options that are beneficial for health, environment and sustainable development. Details include guidance on how to link environment to health outcomes; value health-environment impacts in monetary terms; and conduct assessments.

Please visit: http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2008/9789241563727_eng.pdf
<http://www.who.int/heli/en/index.html>

Response to Air Quality Concerns During the 2008 Beijing Olympics

Air quality is a top priority at the WHO - poor air quality causes about 2 million premature deaths worldwide per year. Air pollution interest during the Beijing Olympics helped raise public awareness and demonstrated the public's growing concern. The 2005 WHO Air Quality Guidelines offers global guidance on reducing the health impacts of air pollution. The values and standards of this guideline are applicable today. Progress towards these targets will result in significant reductions in risks for acute and chronic health effects from poor air.

Please visit: http://www.who.int/phe/air_quality_q&a.pdf
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs313/en/index.html>

Update on Outbreak of Lead Intoxication in Thiaroye sur Mer, Senegal

Following an unexplained cluster of deaths in children from the NGagne Diaw quarter of Thiaroye sur Mer, Dakar, Senegal, an investigation by health and environmental authorities revealed that the area was contaminated with lead from the informal recycling of lead batteries. Following a formal request from Senegal, WHO has deployed an international team consisting of a clinical toxicologist, and environmental health specialist and analytical chemist.

-For more information and an update, please see the below links.
http://www.who.int/environmental_health_emergencies/events/Senegal2008/en/index.html
http://www.who.int/environmental_health_emergencies/events/Senegal2008_update/en/index.html

Emergency Response Exercise—ConvEx-3

International Emergency Conventions (1986) and the International Health Regulations (IHR, 2005) were put to the test in a simulated nuclear emergency in Mexico on 9-10 July. Coordinated by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), together with 74 of its Member States and 10 international organizations (including WHO), the exercise was a crucial part of the international efforts to respond to any radiological or nuclear incident or emergency worldwide.

Please visit: http://www.who.int/environmental_health_emergencies/events/convex2008/en/index.html

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WHO's work in Public Health and Environment (PHE) aims to improve health by preventing and reducing environmental hazards through a proactive, preventive public-health approach.

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Upcoming Events

- Inter-Ministerial Conference, 26-29 August, Libreville-Gabon
www.unep.org/health%2Denv/
- Regional Committee Meeting on Climate Change and Health, 22-26 September, Manila, Philippines

Regular Features

- Recent Publications
- Links to specific news about different topics
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Facts and Figures from the Inter-Ministerial Conference in Gabon

- Approximately 60% of the benefits that the global ecosystem provides to support life are being degraded or used unsustainably.
- A quarter of the global disease burden is associated with environmental risk factors.
- Preventative public health strategies that address environmental degradation can alleviate these health risks and improve the global ecosystem.

News on Global Climate Change Effects on Health

Following from World Health Day on "Health protection from climate change" on April 7th 2008, and in response to the World Health Assembly (WHA) resolution on this issue in May 2008, Public Health and Environment (PHE) is completing its plans to support Member States to protect themselves from emerging health risks of climate change. Since May, workshops have been organized in different regions of the world to identify country needs. Results will help to define a global research agenda and feed into a action plan in October.

Please visit: <http://www.who.int/globalchange/climate/en/>

Joint Monitoring Programme 2008 Report on Water and Sanitation

WHO and UNICEF launched their Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) report, titled "Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation - Special Focus on Sanitation," assesses global, regional and country progress using an innovative "ladder" concept for sanitation and drinking water. This shows sanitation and drinking-water practices in greater detail, enabling experts to highlight trends in using improved facilities, shared and unimproved facilities, sources, and tools.

Please visit: http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/monitoring/jmp2008/en/index.html

To have more specific news about different topics, please visit . . .

- **Healthy Environments for Children Newsletter (HECANET)**
<http://www.who.int/heca/infomaterials/hecanet/en/index.html>
- **Global Occupational Health Newsletter (GOHNET)**
http://www.who.int/occupational_health/publications/newsletter/en/index.html
- **Water, Sanitation and Health listserv**
http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/listserv/en/index.html
- **Environmental Health in Emergencies listserv**
http://www.who.int/environmental_health_emergencies/listserv/en/index.html
- **Global Initiative on Children's Environmental Health Indicators (CEHI)**
<http://www.who.int/cehi/newsletter/en/index.html>
- **Public Health and Environment website**
<http://www.who.int/phe/en/>

Recent Publications

ASSESSMENT AND POLICY TOOLS

- Assessing the environmental burden of disease at national and local levels: Mercury, EBD16
- Poverty, Health and Environment: Placing environment health on countries' development agendas
- Managing the linkages for sustainable development: A toolkit for decision-makers

WATER, SANITATION & HEALTH

- Safe water, better health: Costs, benefits and sustainability of interventions to protect and promote health
- Progress on drinking-water and sanitation: special focus on sanitation

CLIMATE CHANGE

- Protecting health from climate change World Health Day 2008

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

- Essential environmental health standards in health care

For a copy of all our publications, please visit. . .

<http://www.who.int/phe/publications/en/index.html>

Regional Health and Environment Links

- WHO Africa: www.afro.who.int/des/phe/index.html
- WHO South-East Asia Region: www.searo.who.int/en/Section23.htm
- WHO Western Pacific Region: www.wpro.who.int/environmental_health/
- WHO Region of the Americas: www.paho.org/Selection.asp?
- WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region: www.emro.who.int/ceha/
- WHO European Region: www.euro.who.int/envhealth

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