AIR POLLUTION LEVELS RISING IN MANY OF THE WORLD’S POOREST CITIES

More than 80% of people living in urban areas that monitor air pollution are exposed to air quality levels that exceed WHO limits. While all regions of the world are affected, populations in low-income cities are the most impacted. According to the latest urban air quality database, 98% of cities in low- and middle income countries with more than 100 000 inhabitants do not meet WHO air quality guidelines. However, in high-income countries, that percentage decreases to 56%. In the past two years, the database – now covering 3000 cities in 103 countries – has nearly doubled, with more cities measuring air pollution levels and recognizing the associated health impacts. Key trends from 2008-2013:

- Global urban air pollution levels increased by 8%, despite improvements in some regions.
- In general, urban air pollution levels were lowest in high-income countries, with lower levels most prevalent in Europe, the Americas, and the Western Pacific Region.
- The highest urban air pollution levels were experienced in low- and middle-income countries in WHO's Eastern Mediterranean and South-East Asia Regions, with annual mean levels often exceeding 5-10 times WHO limits, followed by low-income cities in the Western Pacific Region.
- In the Eastern Mediterranean and South-East Asia Regions and low-income countries in the Western Pacific Region, levels of urban air pollution have increased by more than 5% in more than two-thirds of the cities.
- In the African Region urban air pollution data remains very sparse, however available data revealed particulate matter (PM) levels above the median. The database now contains PM

CHILDREN’S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH NEWS

Press Releases

World Health Assembly highlights importance of multisectoral action on health
Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, addressed the World Health Assembly today. She stressed the links between climate change and health, including those related to the spread of vector-borne diseases. Ms Figueres also stressed the importance of taking action to prevent health problems, noting that the great majority of health interventions currently focus on treatment. Her address was followed by a technical briefing that underscored the need for multisectoral action in order to achieve the health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and agreement on a new resolution on meeting those goals. (WHO 24/5/2016)

Premature Deaths from Environmental Degradation Threat to Global Public Health, UNEP Report Says
Environmental degradation and pollution is estimated to cause up to 234 times as many premature deaths as occur in conflicts annually, highlighting the importance of a healthy environment to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, according to a new report released at the second United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA2). Environmental impacts are responsible for the deaths of more than one quarter of all children under the age of five, the report states. Healthy Environment, Healthy People - published by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Montreal Protocol on substances that
measurements for more than twice as many cities than previous versions.

WHO Global Urban Ambient Air Pollution Database (update 2016)

Press release

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Air Pollution

Pediatric Emergency Visits and Short-Term Changes in PM2.5 Concentrations in the U.S. State of Georgia

Associations between pediatric emergency department (ED) visits and ambient concentrations of particulate matter \( \leq 2.5 \mu m \) in diameter (PM2.5) have been reported in previous studies, although few were performed in nonmetropolitan areas. Authors estimated associations between daily PM2.5 concentrations, using a two-stage model that included land use parameters and satellite aerosol optical depth measurements at 1-km resolution, and ED visits for six pediatric conditions in the U.S. state of Georgia by urbanicity classification. Pediatric ED visits for asthma or wheeze and for upper respiratory infections were associated with PM2.5 concentrations in Georgia.

Environmental Health Perspectives

Prenatal Ambient Air Pollution, Placental Mitochondrial DNA Content, and Birth Weight in the INMA (Spain) and ENVIRONAGE (Belgium) Birth Cohorts

Mitochondria are sensitive to environmental toxicants due to their lack of repair capacity. Changes in mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) content may represent a biologically relevant intermediate outcome in mechanisms linking air pollution and fetal growth restriction. The authors investigated whether placental mtDNA content is a possible mediator of the association between prenatal nitrogen dioxide (NO2) exposure and birth weight. The results suggest that mtDNA content can be one of the potential mediators of the association between prenatal air pollution exposure and birth weight.

Environmental Health Perspectives

The reduction of birth weight by fine particulate matter and its modification by maternal and neighbourhood-level factors: a multilevel analysis in British Columbia, Canada

The reduction of birth weight by fine particulate matter and its modification by maternal and neighbourhood-level factors: a multilevel analysis in British Columbia, Canada

deplete the ozone layer, and the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions - looks at the dangers posed by air pollution, chemicals, climate change and other issues linking environmental quality to human health and well-being. UNEP (23/5/2016)

New pesticide guidelines seek faster phase-out of risky toxins

FAO and WHO have released new guidelines aimed at reducing the damage done by pesticides that pose especially high toxic risks to human health and the environment. The Guidelines offer a road map to help countries identify and deal with highly hazardous pesticides. This involves inventory taking, assessing risks and actual needs, and then taking appropriate risk mitigation measures. In many cases, this will be phasing out of the product, but in cases where there are no good alternatives, other risk mitigation actions may be considered. FAO has also launched a Pesticide Registration Toolkit to assist governments in conducting hazard and risk assessments as part of their national pesticide approval process. This toolkit can also be used to re-assess products that have been approved in the past, but are now identified as highly hazardous. WHO (10/5/2016)

Laws to protect breastfeeding inadequate in most countries

A new report by WHO, UNICEF, and the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) reveals the status of national laws to protect and promote breastfeeding. Of the 194 countries analysed in the report, 135 have in place some form of legal measure related to the International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes and subsequent resolutions adopted by the World Health Assembly (the Code). This is up from 103 countries in 2011, when the last WHO analysis was done. Only 39 countries have laws that enact all provisions of the Code, however, a slight increase from 37 in 2011. WHO (9/5/2016)

Laws to protect breastfeeding inadequate in most countries

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The purpose of this research was to determine the relationship between modelled particulate matter (PM2.5) exposure and birth weight, including the potential modification by maternal risk factors and indicators of socioeconomic status (SES). The study provides evidence that neighbourhood-level SES variables and PM2.5 have both independent and interacting associations with birth weight, and together account for 49% of the between-neighbourhood differences in birth weight. Evidence of effect modification of PM2.5 on birth weight across various maternal and neighbourhood-level factors suggests that certain sub-populations may be more or less vulnerable to relatively low doses PM2.5 exposure.

Environmental Health

Household air pollution and under-five mortality in India (1992–2006)
Household air pollution (HAP), predominantly from cooking fuel, is a major public health hazard and one of the leading causes of respiratory illness and deaths among children under-five years in India. This study investigates the association between HAP from cooking fuel and under-five mortality using India’s National Family and Health Survey (NFHS) datasets over the period 1992–2006 (total of 166,382 children), and the extent to which the association differed by environmental and behavioral factors affecting level of exposure. The association between HAP and under-five mortality of three age-groups (neonatal age between 0–28 days, post-neonatal age between 1–11 months and children aged between 12–59 months) was examined using multi-level logistic regression models. Use of cooking fuel in the household is associated with increased risk of mortality in children aged under-five years. Factors relating to access to clean fuels, improvements in infrastructure and household design and behavioral factors are discussed, and can result in further declines in under-five mortality in India.

Environmental Health

Chemicals

Maternal levels of endocrine disruptors, polybrominated diphenyl ethers, in early pregnancy are not associated with lower birth weight in the Canadian birth cohort GESTE
Polybrominated diphenyl ethers are known endocrine disrupting environmental contaminants used as flame retardants. Their levels have increased in humans over the last ten years, raising concerns about their consequences on

last WHO analysis was done. However, only 39 countries have laws that enact all provisions of the Code—a slight increase from 37 in 2011. PAHO (9/5/2016)

The time is right to invest in adolescents
Commentary by Anthony Costello, WHO Director, Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health.
With the launch of WHO’s report "Health for the World’s Adolescents" in 2014, adolescents’ health and well-being has taken front stage. The new recommendations from the Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing emphasize and build on steps we’ve started to take to ensure adolescents reach their full potential. While we know much more than we did 10 years ago, we need to work out how to reach out to adolescents and involve them actively in programmes that improve their health. For today’s adolescents are the people who will drive forward achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the future we want. WHO (10/5/2016)

Leave no one behind: Women, children and adolescent health in emergencies
Commentary by Her Royal Highness Princess Sarah Zeid of Jordan and Dr Flavia Bustreo, WHO Assistant Director-General, Family, Women's and Children's Health.
Worldwide, women and children are up to 14 times more likely than men to die in a sudden-onset disaster. For those that survive, life doesn't stop. Women still have babies. Children still need to be vaccinated, and adolescents still need access to education and health care services, including contraception. While women’s and children’s survival improved through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the UN Secretary-General’s 2010 global strategy for Every Woman Every Child, more than 80% of the countries that did not achieve the goals endured a recent conflict, natural disaster or both. Embedded and aligned with the SDGs, the new Global Strategy for Women's, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health is targeting more than survival. It’s calling for transformative actions that provide women, children and adolescents with what they need to thrive and transform the societies we live in. WHO (13/5/2016)

Address worsening urban air quality as a priority
human health. Some animal studies suggest that PBDEs can affect fetal growth; however, the results of human studies are contradictory. This study evaluates the association between the most common PBDEs in maternal blood measured in early pregnancy and birth weight. There was no statistically significant relationship between PBDE levels in early pregnancy and birth weight in both unadjusted and multivariate regression models. These results suggest that PBDEs in early pregnancy have little or no direct impact on birth weight, at least at the levels of exposure in our population.

Environmental Health

Concentrations of persistent organic pollutants in maternal and cord blood from the maternal-infant research on environmental chemicals (MIREC) cohort study

During pregnancy and lactation chemical body burdens may change due to the significant physiological changes that occur. Developmental exposures to some persistent organic pollutants (POPs) have been linked with adverse health outcomes. First trimester maternal and cord blood plasma concentrations of several POPs including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), organochlorine pesticides (OCs), polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) and perfluoroalkyl substances (PFASs) were measured in samples from 1983 pregnant women enrolled in the Maternal-Infant Research on Environmental Chemicals (MIREC) cohort. Predictors of exposure were also identified. In the MIREC study, multiple chemical contaminants were quantified in the plasma of pregnant women. In cord plasma PFOA had the highest detection rate. However, compared to other Canadian and international population studies, the MIREC participants had lower contaminant concentrations of these substances.

Environmental Health

Organophosphate Insecticide Metabolites in Prenatal and Childhood Urine Samples and Intelligence Scores at 6 Years of Age: Results from the Mother–Child PELAGIE Cohort (France)

Several studies suggest that exposure to organophosphate insecticides (OP) during pregnancy impairs neurodevelopment in children. The authors evaluated associations between biomarkers of prenatal and postnatal OP exposure and cognitive function of 6-year-olds in a French longitudinal birth cohort. The study found no evidence that prenatal OP exposure adversely

Commentary by Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia.

Improving air quality must be a top health and development priority in countries of WHO South-East Asia Region as increasing air pollution levels are putting the health of billions of people at risk. A new global report on trends in air quality shows that the levels of urban air pollution in the Region have increased by over 5% in more than two-thirds of our cities. Though awareness is rising, there is an urgent need to address the problem and implement evidence-based interventions. WHO SEARO (12/5/2016)

Fact sheets

Road traffic injuries Updated May 2016

Adolescents: health risks and solutions Updated May 2016

Dracunculiasis (guinea-worm disease) Updated May 2016

In the Media

Peru Declares Emergency over Mercury Contamination in Amazon

The Peruvian government has declared a state of emergency in 11 towns in the Madre de Dios region bordering Brazil after officials found alarmingly high levels of mercury, a harmful heavy metal used in gold mining. Mercury contamination may have affected 50,000 people, said Health Vice-Minister Percy Minaya in a press conference Monday, with deposits likely to be found in the air, water, fish and sediment. The contamination is allegedly due to illegal mining, according to the government, with mercury used to extract gold in rivers. Telesur (23/5/2016)

Zika outbreak fuelled by mosquito control failure, says WHO boss

The spread of Zika is the price being paid for a massive policy failure on mosquito control, says World Health Organization leader Margaret Chan. Speaking at the agency's annual World Health Assembly, Dr Chan said experts had “dropped the ball” in the 1970s with regards to getting a handle on disease-carrying insects. More than 60 countries and territories now have continuing Zika transmission. BBC (23/5/2016)

Lawmakers Reach Deal to Expand Regulation of Toxic Chemicals
affected cognitive function in 6-year-olds, perhaps because of the population’s socioeconomic status, which was higher than in previous studies, though other causal and noncausal explanations are also possible. The negative association between WISC score and concurrent DE urinary concentrations requires replication by longitudinal studies investigating childhood OP exposure. Environmental Health Perspectives

**Lead Exposure during Early Human Development and DNA Methylation of Imprinted Gene Regulatory Elements in Adulthood**
Lead exposure during early development causes neurodevelopmental disorders by unknown mechanisms. Epidemiologic studies have focused recently on determining associations between lead exposure and global DNA methylation; however, such approaches preclude the identification of loci that may alter human disease risk. The objective of this study was to determine whether maternal, postnatal, and early childhood lead exposure can alter the differentially methylated regions (DMRs) that control the monoallelic expression of imprinted genes involved in metabolism, growth, and development. The findings of this study provide evidence that early childhood lead exposure results in sex-dependent and gene-specific DNA methylation differences in the DMRs of PEG3, IGF2/H19, and PLAGL1/HYMAI in adulthood. Environmental Health Perspectives

**Association of birth outcomes with fetal exposure to parabens, triclosan and triclocarban in an immigrant population in Brooklyn, New York**
Prior studies suggest associations between fetal exposure to antimicrobial and paraben compounds with adverse reproductive outcomes, mainly in animal models. Elevated levels of these compounds for a cohort of mothers and neonates have been previously reported. The relationship between human exposure to parabens and antimicrobial compounds and birth outcomes including birth weight, body length and head size, and gestational age at birth were examined. This study provides the first evidence of associations between antimicrobials and potential adverse birth outcomes in neonates. Findings are consistent with animal data suggesting endocrine-disrupting potential resulting in developmental and reproductive toxicity. Journal of Hazardous Materials

House and Senate negotiators reached agreement on Thursday on far-reaching legislation to overhaul the nation’s 40-year-old law governing toxic chemicals, a compromise that would subject thousands of household chemicals to regulation for the first time. The new measure would require the Environmental Protection Agency (E.P.A.) to begin evaluating those untested chemicals, to prioritize high-risk chemicals, and to test at least 20 chemicals at any given moment, with each test limited to seven years. User fees of as much as $25 million a year would be levied on companies to help pay for the testing. The new legislation would also require the E.P.A. to take only the health and environmental effects of a chemical into account when devising new rules, not the financial effect of those regulations. New York Times (19/5/2016)

**Farming is ‘single biggest cause’ of worst air pollution in Europe**
Farming is the biggest single cause of the worst air pollution in Europe, a new study has found, as nitrogen compounds from fertilisers and animal waste drift over industrial regions. When the nitrogen compounds are mixed with air already polluted from industry, they combine to form solid particles that can stick in the fine lung tissue of children and adults, causing breathing difficulties, impaired lungs and heart function, and eventually even premature death. The Guardian (18/5/2016)

**Why air pollution in schools is such a big deal – and what to do about it**
Former London mayor Boris Johnson has been accused of holding back negative findings from a 2013 report on the city’s air pollution. The report stated that 433 of London’s 1,777 primary schools were in areas where nitrogen dioxide concentrations breached EU limits. Nitrogen dioxide, or NO2, is an air pollutant that when inhaled can aggravate respiratory diseases such as asthma, emphysema and bronchitis. Of those 433 polluted schools, 82% were officially considered “deprived” (where more than 40% of pupils eligible for free school meals). The London report highlights the importance of environmental justice: deprived poorer communities suffer from poor air quality more than wealthy communities and by implication its associated disease burden. The Conversation UK (18/5/2016)

**The global air pollution ‘blindspot’ affecting 1 billion people**
More than 1 billion people live in countries that do not monitor the air they breathe, according to data
This study looked at predictors of exposure to polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) with a focus on dietary and household-level factors. Spanish women (n=541) completed two semiquantitative questionnaires during their first and third trimester, with the daily mean intake (grams) of eggs, dairy products, meat, cereals and pasta, vegetables and pulses, fruits, shellfish and cephalopods, and fish, and the weekly mean intake (servings) of lean, large oily, other oily, and other fish being averaged. In addition to this, information on house size, curtains and carpets at home, mattress type, housekeeping frequency, and television use was also collected later in gestation. Multivariate-censored regression was used to assess the association between PBDE concentration (log2 transformed) and potential predictors. In conclusion, seafood consumption, higher housekeeping frequency, and foam mattress were associated with prenatal PBDE exposure.

Environmental Science and Technology

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Birth Weight, Ethnicity, and Exposure to Trihalomethanes and Haloacetic Acids in Drinking Water during Pregnancy in the Born in Bradford Cohort

Evidence for a relationship between trihalomethane (THM) or haloacetic acid (HAA) exposure and adverse fetal growth is inconsistent. Disinfection by-products exist as complex mixtures in water supplies, but THMs and HAAs have typically been examined separately. Authors investigated joint exposure at the individual level to THMs and HAAs in relation to birth weight in the multi-ethnic Born in Bradford birth cohort. To the authors knowledge, this is the largest DBP and fetal growth study to date with individual water use data, and the first to examine individual-level estimates of joint THM–HAA exposure. Our findings demonstrate associations between THM, but not HAA, exposure during pregnancy and reduced birth weight, but suggest this differs by ethnicity. This study suggests that THMs are not acting as a proxy for HAAs, or vice-versa.

Environmental Health Perspectives

E-waste

Soap, makeup additives linked to preterm births, smaller babies

Pregnant women in Brooklyn with high levels of certain compounds used in makeup and soaps were more likely to have preterm births and babies that weighed less, according to a new study. The study, published online last week in the Journal of Hazardous Materials, provides the first evidence released by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Guardian analysis has revealed a great air pollution blindspot stretching the length of Africa, across large parts of the former Soviet Union, south-east Asia and the Caribbean. In 92 countries the monitoring equipment and staff needed to measure one of the world’s most deadly pollutants - particulate matter (PM) - are simply not available. A further 33 countries, including Indonesia, Egypt and Russia monitor just one or two cities. The Guardian (17/5/2016)

The planet's health is essential to prevent infectious disease

The environmental degradation of natural ecosystems has resulted in many negative outcomes, one of which is the outbreak of infectious disease. The vast majority of human infectious diseases, such as malaria, Zika, and HIV/Aids, originate in animals. When we disrupt the natural environment and habitat of animals, we are poking the beast, so to speak. “Public health alone can take us only so far in addressing today’s complex health challenges,” said Michael Myers, managing director of the Rockefeller Foundation. “We see the need for a new interdisciplinary field that’s as relevant for this century as public health was for the last – planetary health, or what we consider public health 2.0. By embracing the new reality that our health and the planet’s health are inextricably linked, the field of planetary health will identify more effective approaches to ensuring our own health.” The Guardian (15/5/2016)

Air pollution rising at an 'alarming rate' in world's cities

Outdoor air pollution has grown 8% globally in the past five years, with billions of people around the world now exposed to dangerous air, according to new data from more than 3,000 cities compiled by the World Health Organisation (WHO). While all regions are affected, fast-growing cities in the Middle East, south-east Asia and the western Pacific are the most impacted with many showing pollution levels at five to 10 times above WHO recommended levels. The Guardian (12/5/2016)
E-Waste and Harm to Vulnerable Populations: A Growing Global Problem

Electronic waste (e-waste) is produced in staggering quantities, estimated globally to be 41.8 million tonnes in 2014. Informal e-waste recycling is a source of much-needed income in many low-to middle-income countries. However, its handling and disposal in underdeveloped countries is often unsafe and leads to contaminated environments. E-waste hazards have not yet received the attention they deserve in research and public health agendas. We provide an overview of the scale and health risks. This publication reviews international efforts concerned with environmental hazards, especially affecting children, as a preface to presenting next steps in addressing health issues stemming from the global e-waste problem. Global, national, and local levels efforts must aim to create safe recycling operations that consider broad security issues for people who rely on e-waste processing for survival. Paramount to these efforts is reducing pregnant women and children’s e-waste exposures to mitigate harmful health effects.

New Publications

Flipbook: Sustainable management of waste electrical and electronic equipment in Latin America
This report was developed by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), in collaboration with WHO and other international and regional organizations. The report outlines the state of e-waste management in Latin America and provides an introduction to the general principles of e-waste management (including relevant processes and technologies), as well an overview of policies, strategies and regulatory frameworks that have been successful in promoting the environmentally sustainable management of e-waste in other regions of the world. In the report is a chapter dedicated to health, particularly that of vulnerable populations, such as children. It further offers guidance to the region on essential steps for, and a roadmap towards, environmentally-sustainable e-waste management, and highlights the importance of implementing international technical standards. Available in Spanish and English

GPS tracking devices catch major US recyclers exporting toxic e-waste
A two-year investigation of electronics recycling using GPS tracking devices has revealed that policies aimed at curtailing the trade in toxic e-waste have been unsuccessful, with nearly one-third of the devices being exported to developing countries, where equipment is often dismantled in low-tech workshops — often by children — endangering workers, their families, and contaminating the surrounding environment. The Intercept (11/5/2016)

Air pollution in India is so bad that it kills half a million people every year
A new paper has added to the growing body of research indicating that India’s air pollution has become a matter of life and death. The study, published this week in the journal Geophysical Research Letters, suggests that outdoor air pollution in the country is contributing to more than half a million premature deaths each year at the cost of hundreds of billions of dollars. The Washington Post (11/5/2016)

E-cigarette poisonings in kids skyrocket, study finds
The number of children under 6 poisoned by nicotine in e-cigarettes rose by nearly 1,500% between 2013 and 2015, and one child died, according to an analysis of calls to the National Poison Data System published in the journal Paediatrics. More than 90% of the children swallowed the nicotine-laced liquid, known as e-juice, which is smoked inside e-cigarettes. Nearly half of the exposed children were under the age of 2. CNN (9/5/2016)

43 years after chemical mix-up, Michigan blood shows elevated toxin levels
In 1973 and 1974 a Gratiot County chemical plant accidentally switched a ton of Nutrimate, a cattle feed supplement that boosted a cow’s milk supply, with Firemaster, a toxic flame retardant — causing one of the largest chemical poisonings in the western world. Researchers say that many in Michigan still have elevated blood PBB levels from consuming contaminated eggs, milk, butter, that germ-killing and preservative chemicals used in cosmetics and soaps might impact newborns’ health. It also bolsters suspicions that chemicals in soaps and lotions disrupt people’s endocrine systems, which are crucial for reproduction and babies’ development. Environmental Health News (11/5/2016)
The Global strategy for women's, children's and adolescents' health (2016-2030): a roadmap based on evidence and country experience

The Global strategy for women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health (2016–2030) provides a roadmap for ending preventable deaths of women, children and adolescents by 2030 and helping them achieve their potential for and rights to health and well-being in all settings. The global strategy has three objectives: survive (end preventable deaths); thrive (ensure health and well-being); and transform (expand enabling environments). These objective are aligned with 17 targets within nine of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) including SDG3 on health and other SDGs related to the political, social, economic and environmental determinants of health and sustainable development. With its accompanying operational framework, the strategy serves as a roadmap for collective action to advance the health and well-being of women, children and adolescents, which will be central to achieving the SDGs.

Young people’s contribution to the Global strategy for women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health (2016-2030)

With 1.8 billion people aged 10-24 years in the world there is now an increased recognition of the need to invest in young people, as the behaviours shaped in adolescence can have long term effects. In alignment with the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the Global strategy for women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health (2016-2030), it is important to prioritize young people. Participants to the development of the strategy called for inclusion of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality for young people. The objectives for 2016 include: strengthening the role of young people in accountability, advocating for comprehensive national adolescent health policies and supporting the implementation of the global strategy.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Environmental Impact 2016
8 - 10 June 2016. Valencia, Spain

The 2nd International Conference on Environmental Pollution and Health
13-15 June 2016, Guangzhou, China

cheese and meat. Six in 10 people tested for PBB in Michigan today - including some born after the disaster - have levels above the national average, according to researchers at Emory University in Georgia. Because PBB lives for decades in body fat and mimics the effects of estrogen, people directly or indirectly exposed have become prone to reproductive health issues and thyroid problems. M Live Michigan (9/5/2016)

Air pollutants blamed for rising birth defects in South Korea: study

The number of South Korean babies with birth defects has increased significantly since the early 1990s, likely due to traffic-related air pollutants and endocrine disruptors, a study showed Monday. The report, by Inha University’s Social and Preventive Medicine department, researched the national health insurance data of 403,250 infants aged 0-1 living in Korea’s seven metropolitan areas between 2009 and 2010. It found that 5.5 percent of all infants researched during the period had birth defects, an increase from the 3.3 percent of those born between 1993 and 1994. The Korea Herald (9/5/2016)

India Is Set To Spend Over $6 Billion On Restoring Their Forests

The Indian government is planning on spending an impressive $6.2 billion on reforesting parts of the country. The scheme, which has unilateral support and has already been passed by members of India's lower house of Parliament, is now just waiting to be passed by the upper house. The aim is to increase the overall forest cover of the nation, which currently covers 21 percent of the country’s surface, up to 33 percent over the coming years. The money has been collected by the government over the past 12 years from various private companies who have paid fees to let them set up projects on forested land. In a country that has one of the largest human populations, currently estimated at around 1.2 billion people, the environment has come under increasing pressure. While historically nature has suffered, it seems that potentially things might change, however slightly. IFL Science (8/5/2016)

The Case for Climate Action

In perhaps the last great rebranding effort before the US President leaves office in January, the administration is recasting its campaign to slow climate change not merely as an economic imperative, not only as a national security priority, but perhaps above all, an issue of public health.
UNESCO-IHE Hazardous Waste Management short course 2016
1 – 11 September 2016

8th International Network on Children’s Health, Environment and Safety (INCHES) Conference
14-16 September 2016, Barcelona, Spain

The 12th World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion - Safety 2016
18 - 21 September 2016. Tampere, Finland

International Congress for Tropical Medicine and Malaria 2016
18 - 22 September 2016. Brisbane, Australia

21st WONCA World Conference of Family Doctors
2 – 6 November 2016. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

PPTox V (Prenatal Programming and Toxicity V)
13 -16 November 2016. Kitakyushu, Japan

17th International Conference of the Pacific Basin Consortium
1 – 4 March 2017. Delhi, India

The EPA is, at heart, a public health agency: As early as 1955, 15 years before the EPA was founded, Congress made the link between air pollution and human health explicit, calling for limits to any emission that poses "dangers to the public health and welfare" – a position reiterated in the Clean Air Act in 1970. In 2007, the Supreme Court declared that greenhouse gases are also air pollutants, and that the EPA must therefore determine whether they threaten human health. US News (6/5/2016)

India Is Desperate For Toilets But Isn’t Reaching Its Construction Targets
Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi famously promised to make India flush with amenities, saying he would prioritize the building of toilets over temples. However, the goal of eradicating open defecation by making sure every home has an indoor toilet by 2019 isn’t moving as smoothly as planned. Eleven states, including Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala and Sikkim, didn’t report completion of even a single toilet for households. A lack of proper sanitation in the country poses a serious threat to the health of children, where hundreds of thousands die every year because of diseases transmitted through human waste. Wall Street Journal (2/5/2016)

Unchecked pollution and bad food ‘killing thousands in UK’
Thousands of people are dying each year because of the government’s failure to tackle food poisoning, health and safety breaches and pollution, a thinktank is warning. A new report from the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies (CCJS) claims that lax regulation and weak enforcement are failing to hold businesses in check and are tantamount to state-facilitated “social murder”. The Guardian (1/5/2016)

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