





# COP28 UAE

## Excellencies, colleagues,

I am pleased to enclose the COP28 Declaration on Climate and Health for your consideration and endorsement.

Over the last year of consultations, our incoming Presidency has heard overwhelmingly from parties, observers, the health community, and other stakeholders that they would like to see COP28 recognize the already severe and growing impacts of climate change on human health. At the same time, they have expressed the view that COP28 should also be a moment of hope and mobilization, where we place the vast economic and equity benefits of improving human health through climate action at the heart of our work.

Working with a diverse contact group of countries and the UAE Ministry of Health and Prevention, and informed by partnership with the World Health Organization and many rounds of consultation at intergovernmental fora across 2023, we have developed the COP28 Declaration on Climate and Health to capture both the threats and opportunities in the climate-health nexus and offer a path forward.

The Declaration is a voluntary call to action that sits outside the formal UNFCCC negotiations and reflects the shared views and aspirations of countries as we collectively aim to safeguard and invest in our population's health. In this year of the Global Stocktake, the declaration speaks to the urgency of sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and dramatic enhancements of adaptation and resilience. It is intended as a clear signal of ambition and unity on health as we implement the Paris Agreement.

The Declaration will be launched at the COP process' first Health Day and discussed at the first climate-health ministerial, on 3 December. COP28 would like to encourage your government's endorsement via email, letter, or note verbale using [health@cop28.com](mailto:health@cop28.com) before 30 November.

Recognizing that countries have nationally determined approaches and priorities, we encourage you to also summarize your action on climate and health, highlighting some of the key policy, finance, and technology measures that your government has recently taken or committed to. These will be captured in an outcome document for the climate-health ministerial.

I look forward to collaborating with you on a defining moment in the COP process for a healthier people and planet.

**Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber**

COP28 President-Designate  
UAE Special Envoy for Climate Change



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## COP28 Declaration on Climate and Health

We, on the occasion of the first Health Day at the 28th UN Climate Change Conference (COP28), express our grave concern about the negative impacts of climate change on health. We stress the importance of addressing the interactions between climate change and human health and wellbeing in the context of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, as the primary international, intergovernmental fora for the global response to climate change.

We recognize the urgency of taking action on climate change, and note the benefits for health from deep, rapid, and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, including from just transitions, lower air pollution, active mobility, and shifts to sustainable healthy diets.

In this year of the first Global Stocktake, and given the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, which strained all health systems and further widened inequities and vulnerabilities within and among countries, regions and populations, we are committed to the advancement of climate-resilient development, the strengthening of health systems, and the building of resilient and thriving communities, for the benefit of present and future generations.

In order to work towards ensuring better health outcomes, including through the transformation of health systems to be climate-resilient, low-carbon, sustainable and equitable, and to better prepare communities and the most vulnerable populations for the impacts of climate change, we commit to pursuing the following common objectives:

- Strengthening the development and implementation of policies that maximize the health gains from mitigation and adaptation actions and prevent worsening health impacts from climate change, including through close partnerships with Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women and girls, children and youth, healthcare workers and practitioners, persons with disabilities and the populations most vulnerable to the health impacts of climate change, among others.
- Facilitating collaboration on human, animal, environment and climate health challenges, such as by implementing a One Health approach; addressing the environmental determinants of health; strengthening research on the linkages between environmental and climatic factors and antimicrobial resistance; and intensifying efforts for the early detection of zoonotic spill-overs as an effective means of pandemic prevention, preparedness and response.
- Recognizing that healthy populations contribute to, and are an effect of, climate resilience and an outcome of successful adaptation across a range of sectors - including food and agriculture, water and sanitation, housing, urban planning, health care, transport and energy - by prioritizing and implementing adaptation actions across sectors that deliver positive health outcomes.
- Improving the ability of health systems to anticipate, and implement adaptation interventions against, climate-sensitive disease and health risks, including by bolstering climate-health information services, surveillance, early warning and response systems and a climate-ready health workforce.



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- Promoting a comprehensive response to address the impacts of climate change on health, including, for example, mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, loss of traditional medicinal knowledge, loss of livelihoods and culture, and climate-induced displacement and migration.
- Combating inequalities within and among countries, and pursuing policies that work towards accelerating achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG3; reduce poverty and hunger; improve health and livelihoods; strengthen social protection systems, food security and improved nutrition, access to clean sources of energy, safe drinking water, and sanitation and hygiene for all; and work to achieve universal health coverage.
- Promoting steps to curb emissions and reduce waste in the health sector, such as by assessing the greenhouse gas emissions of health systems, and developing action plans, nationally determined decarbonization targets, and procurement standards for national health systems, including supply chains.
- Strengthening trans- and inter-disciplinary research, cross-sectoral collaboration, sharing of best practices, and monitoring of progress at the climate-health nexus, including through initiatives such as the Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH).

Recognizing that health actors face challenges in accessing finance for health and climate change activities, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, we underscore the need to better leverage synergies at the intersection of climate change and health to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of finance flows.

- Encouraging the scaling up of investments in climate and health from domestic budgets, multilateral development banks, multilateral climate funds, health financing institutions, philanthropies, bilateral development agencies, and private sector actors.
- Encouraging international finance providers, including development banks, to strengthen the synergies between their climate and health portfolios, and enhance their support for country-led projects and programs in the health-climate nexus.
- Sharing learnings and best practices on financing and implementing climate-health interventions, and develop a common understanding of existing needs for climate-health finance, grounded in country priorities and needs. We welcome ongoing efforts in this regard, including by the COP28 presidency, the ATACH finance working group, and the joint Development Bank working group for climate-health financing.
- Improving monitoring, transparency and evaluation efforts of climate finance, as relevant, including for climate-health initiatives, in order to strengthen common understanding of its efficiency and effectiveness, and to maximize the delivery of positive health outcomes.



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To achieve these aims - according to our national circumstances - we commit to pursuing the better integration of health considerations into our climate policy processes, and of climate considerations across our health policy agendas, including by:

- Incorporating health considerations in the context of relevant Paris Agreement and UNFCCC processes, with a view to minimizing adverse effects on public health, and mainstreaming climate considerations in global health work programs, including those of the World Health Organization, where relevant and appropriate.
- Taking health into account, as appropriate, in designing the next round of nationally determined contributions, long term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies, national adaptation plans and adaptation communications.

We commit to convene regularly with diverse line-ministries and stakeholders to foster synergies and strengthen national and multilateral collaboration on climate change and health, including through the ATACH initiative. We will review our collective progress at future UN Climate Change Conferences, World Health Assemblies, and other global convenings.



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## Annotations (not part of the declaration)

**"First Health Day"** COP28 is introducing the first-ever Health Day in the COP process. This is part of the COP28 thematic program and the Climate Action Agenda, and has no implications for the formally negotiated part of UNFCCC. Health Day will take place on 3rd December, and will feature a rich program of events, as well as the first-ever climate-health ministerial. More information on the events for Health Day can be found at: [www.cop28.com/en/health-events](http://www.cop28.com/en/health-events).

**"...stress the importance of addressing the interactions between climate change and human health and wellbeing in the context of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement."** For more information, please consult the COP26 special report on climate change and health: [www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240036727](http://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240036727).

**"We recognize the urgency of taking action on climate change, and note the benefits for health from deep, rapid, and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions..."** The synthesis report of the IPCC sixth assessment report, paragraph C.2, states: "Deep, rapid and sustained mitigation and accelerated implementation of adaptation actions in this decade would reduce projected losses and damages for humans and ecosystems, and deliver many co-benefits, especially for air quality and health." [https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6syр/pdf/IPCC\\_AR6\\_SYR\\_SPM.pdf](https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6syр/pdf/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf).

**"...including from just transitions..."** The Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan highlights the need for "accelerating clean and just transitions to renewable energy during this critical decade of action" <https://unfccc.int/documents/626561>.

**"lower air pollution, active mobility, and shifts to sustainable healthy diets."** The synthesis report of the IPCC sixth assessment report, paragraph C.2.3, states: "Accelerated climate action can also provide co-benefits. Many mitigation actions would have benefits for health through lower air pollution, active mobility (e.g., walking, cycling), and shifts to sustainable healthy diets." [https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6syр/pdf/IPCC\\_AR6\\_SYR\\_SPM.pdf](https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6syр/pdf/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf).

**"In this year of the first Global Stocktake..."** More information on the Global Stocktake can be found on the UNFCCC website at <https://unfccc.int/topics/global-stocktake/about-the-global-stocktake/why-the-global-stocktake-is-a-critical-moment-for-climate-action>. A Q&A document on the Global Stocktake can be found here: <https://unfccc.int/topics/global-stocktake/about-the-global-stocktake/frequently-asked-questions-about-the-global-stocktake>.

**"...and given the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic..."** This might include, but is not limited to, the lessons learned as highlighted in the WHO Manifesto for a Healthy Recovery from COVID-19: [www.who.int/publications/m/item/who-manifesto-for-a-healthy-recovery-from-covid-19](http://www.who.int/publications/m/item/who-manifesto-for-a-healthy-recovery-from-covid-19).

**"...widened inequities and vulnerabilities within and among countries, regions and populations..."** Political Declaration of the United Nations General Assembly High-level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response. [www.un.org/pga/77/wp-content/uploads/sites/105/2023/09/PPPR-Final-Text.pdf](http://www.un.org/pga/77/wp-content/uploads/sites/105/2023/09/PPPR-Final-Text.pdf).





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**"...we are committed to the advancement of climate-resilient development..."** A description of climate resilient development can be found on the IPCC website at [www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/about/frequently-asked-questions/keyfaq6/](http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/about/frequently-asked-questions/keyfaq6/).

**"...for the benefit of present and future generations."** The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change both clearly acknowledge future generations. For more information on the need to ensure intergenerational solidarity, please consult [www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/our-common-agenda-policy-brief-future-generations-en.pdf](http://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/our-common-agenda-policy-brief-future-generations-en.pdf).

**"...the transformation of health systems to be climate-resilient, low-carbon, sustainable and equitable..."** Seventy-five countries have already committed to build climate resilient and sustainable health systems, as part of the Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH). [www.who.int/initiatives/alliance-for-transformative-action-on-climate-and-health](http://www.who.int/initiatives/alliance-for-transformative-action-on-climate-and-health).

**"Strengthening the development and implementation of climate and health policies, in order to maximize the health gains from mitigation and adaptation actions and prevent worsening health impacts from climate change..."** In a 2021 review of 95 countries by the World Health Organization, over three quarters of surveyed countries (77%) indicated they have developed or are currently developing national health and climate change plans or strategies. [www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240038509](http://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240038509).

**"Facilitating collaboration on human, animal, environment and climate health challenges, such as by implementing a One Health approach..."** The One Health approach has been supported by the 2023 G7 Nagasaki Health Ministers' Communiqué: [www.mhlw.go.jp/content/10500000/001096403.pdf](http://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/10500000/001096403.pdf). The G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration calls for the strengthening of global health and implementing a One Health approach, including by enhancing pandemic preparedness and strengthening existing infectious diseases surveillance systems: [https://www.g20.org/content/dam/gtwenty/gtwenty\\_new/document/G20-New-Delhi-Leaders-Declaration.pdf](https://www.g20.org/content/dam/gtwenty/gtwenty_new/document/G20-New-Delhi-Leaders-Declaration.pdf).

**"Recognizing that healthy populations contribute to, and are an effect of, climate resilience and an outcome of successful adaptation across a range of sectors..."** The synthesis report of the IPCC sixth assessment report states that "Many adaptation measures that benefit health and wellbeing are found in other sectors (e.g., food, livelihoods, social protection, water and sanitation, infrastructure) ... Adaptation can generate multiple additional benefits such as ... health and well-being..." [https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6syр/pdf/IPCC\\_AR6\\_SYR\\_LongerReport.pdf](https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6syр/pdf/IPCC_AR6_SYR_LongerReport.pdf).

**"Improving the ability of health systems to anticipate, and implement adaptation interventions against, climate-sensitive disease and health risks..."** For more information on health system resilience and adaptation, please consult the WHO Operational framework for building climate resilient health systems. [www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241565073](http://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241565073). For more information on climate-health information services, please consult the WMO guidance and resources available at <https://public.wmo.int/en/resources/library/climate-services-health-case-studies>.



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**“Promoting a comprehensive response to address the impacts of climate change on health...”** For more information on the impacts of climate change on mental health and psychosocial wellbeing, please consult the WHO policy brief ‘mental health and climate change’ at [www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240045125](http://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240045125). The synthesis report of the IPCC sixth assessment report makes reference to loss of livelihoods and culture, displacement and climate-induced migration: [https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6syr/pdf/IPCC\\_AR6\\_SYR\\_LongerReport.pdf](https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6syr/pdf/IPCC_AR6_SYR_LongerReport.pdf).

**“Promoting steps to curb emissions and reduce waste in the health sector...”** For more information on global emissions in the health sector, please consult [https://noharm-global.org/sites/default/files/documents-files/5961/HealthCaresClimateFootprint\\_092319.pdf](https://noharm-global.org/sites/default/files/documents-files/5961/HealthCaresClimateFootprint_092319.pdf).

**“Strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration, sharing of best practices, and monitoring of progress at the climate-health nexus, including through initiatives such as the Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health...”** These objectives build on the G20 New Delhi Leaders’ Declaration, which calls to “Enhance the resilience of health systems and support development of climate-resilient and low-carbon health systems in collaboration with MDBs, and support the work of the WHO-led Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH).” [https://www.g20.org/content/dam/gtwenty/gtwenty\\_new/document/G20-New-Delhi-Leaders-Declaration.pdf](https://www.g20.org/content/dam/gtwenty/gtwenty_new/document/G20-New-Delhi-Leaders-Declaration.pdf).

**“Recognizing that health actors face challenges in accessing finance for health and climate change activities, particularly in low- and middle-income countries...”** In a 2021 review of countries by the World Health Organization, only 28% of low- and middle-income countries (11 out of 39 countries) reported that the ministry of health is currently receiving international funds to support their health adaptation and mitigation activities. [www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240038509](http://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240038509).

**“...we underscore the need to better leverage synergies at the intersection of climate change and health to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of finance flows.”** For more information on the barriers to, and opportunities for, synergistic funding on climate and health, please consult [https://globalhealthsciences.ucsf.edu/sites/globalhealthsciences.ucsf.edu/files/climate\\_and\\_health\\_finance\\_final.pdf](https://globalhealthsciences.ucsf.edu/sites/globalhealthsciences.ucsf.edu/files/climate_and_health_finance_final.pdf).

**“We welcome ongoing efforts in this regard, including by the COP28 presidency, the ATACH finance working group, and the joint Development Bank working group for climate-health financing.”** More information on the ATACH finance working group can be found at [www.who.int/initiatives/alliance-for-transformative-action-on-climate-and-health/working-groups](http://www.who.int/initiatives/alliance-for-transformative-action-on-climate-and-health/working-groups). The joint Development Bank working group for climate-health financing was established in July 2023. It is hosted by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Climate Investment Funds (CIF). The COP28 presidency is an observer to the group. The group’s purpose is to facilitate collaboration among development banks around climate and health activities.





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**“Taking health into account, as appropriate, in designing the next round of nationally determined contributions, long term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies, national adaptation plans and adaptation communications.”** According to a 2023 review by WHO, over 90% of current Nationally Determined Contributions take health into account. <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/372276>.

**“We will review our collective progress at future UN Climate Change Conferences, World Health Assemblies, and other global convenings.”** This might include the seventy-seventh World Health Assembly in May 2024, which will consider the adoption of a WHA resolution on climate change and health, as well COP30 in Brazil in 2025.



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## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the objective of the COP28 declaration on Climate and Health?

Based on a series of consultations, which the incoming COP28 Presidency has been running since March 2022, parties and non-state actors have repeatedly raised the need to elevate the political visibility of the climate-health nexus, and have asked COP28 to convene a moment and mechanism to capture collective concern and commitments around climate and health. In response to this call, COP28 is introducing the first-ever Health Day in the COP process, as well as hosting its first climate-health ministerial, supported by a political declaration on climate and health.

The COP28 Declaration on Climate and Health is a non-binding, non-negotiated call to action and collective commitment that **reflects the concerns and common position of countries on the importance of health within climate discourse** and in the COP process. It begins to articulate how climate-health is defined and how parties come together to address the urgent need for integrating climate and health. The declaration is intended to serve as a **call to action and joint vision from countries** to convene and collaborate around, and can be taken forward to at the upcoming World Health Assembly and at future COPs. Endorsement of the declaration will be significant and symbolic in showing country consensus around the importance of integrating climate and health and the impact of climate change on human health.

### How was this draft declaration developed?

The declaration was developed by the incoming COP28 Presidency, the Ministry of Health and Prevention (MOHAP) of the United Arab Emirates, and the World Health Organization (WHO), in close partnership with a contact group of "champion countries". **The group of champion countries include: Brazil, Egypt, Fiji, Germany, India, Kenya, Malawi, Maldives, the Netherlands, Sierra Leone, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Egypt, the United States and the United Arab Emirates.** The COP28 Presidency has held a series of consultations with the champion group of countries and other parties and stakeholders to develop the declaration.

The zero-draft declaration was shared with all countries on 26 Sept for comments and feedback, and a series of regional consultations was held in partnership with WHO regional offices between 26 Sept and 15 October. After incorporating feedback from countries, the COP28 Declaration on Climate and Health was shared at the World Health Summit, with the request for countries to endorse the declaration.

### What is the legal status of this document?

The declaration is not a legally binding document. It sits outside of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and is not a negotiated document. It is a voluntary, non-binding political declaration meant to galvanize support for action on climate change and health. The COP28 Presidency has aimed to be as consultative as possible in the development of this declaration, in order for it to adequately reflect country priorities and needs.



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## **What are the main areas covered in the health declaration?**

The declaration will for the first time have a large group of countries calling for a health system response to climate change. It will send a strong signal that countries are committed to transform and strengthen their healthcare systems in response to climate change. The declaration will also call for a scale-up in finance for climate-health, and have countries commit to collaborate more closely on climate-health in the future.

## **Who should endorse the declaration?**

We welcome endorsements from Ministers of Health or other government representatives who can endorse on behalf of their respective countries. The list of countries who have endorsed the declaration will be added to the declaration.

## **How should endorsements be made?**

Endorsements should be transmitted formally via Note Verbale. In addition, a copy of the Note Verbale should be sent to the following email address [health@cop28.com](mailto:health@cop28.com) with the submission of the name and email address of a focal point who can serve as a liaison for communications and preparations for the Health segment of the World Climate Action Summit on December 2nd and for Health Day on 3 December 2023.

## **What is the deadline for endorsement?**

COP28 highly encourages countries to endorse the declaration well in advance of the COP28 opening day; 30 November 2023. The final list of country endorsements will be announced during the high-level Health Segment at World Climate Action Summit on 2 December 2023.

## **Are countries requested to make commitments on climate and health for COP28?**

Ministers of Health and their counterparts in other line ministries are invited to attend Health Day and encouraged to showcase their commitment to, and progress on, climate and health. The COP28 Declaration on Climate and Health will be supplemented with an Annex which provides an overview of country commitments, best practices, and country progress made on climate and health.

The Annex will capture country commitments and will be structured along 3 thematic areas:

1. Promote actions that both reduce carbon emissions and improve health
2. Build better, more resilient and environmentally sustainable health systems
3. Public health measures to protect from the range of climate risks to health

Cross-cutting themes that underpin effective, interconnected delivery will also be featured in the Annex, including: Inclusion (including youth, Indigenous Peoples, gender groups, and others), Frontline Communities, Finance, Technology and Innovation.

In addition, the COP28 Presidency will aim to showcase country commitments and announcements throughout the Health Day program.



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### **How can Ministers of Health participate in Health Day?**

The COP28 declaration on climate and health will be launched at COP28. The declaration and its endorsers will be highlighted during the high-level Health Segment at World Climate Action Summit on 2 December, and as part of the Health Day and climate-health ministerial on 3 December. The ministerial is provisionally scheduled for the late afternoon (4.30 - 6.30pm) followed by an evening reception. Throughout Health Day, and ahead of the ministerial, various high-level events will provide opportunities for various ministers to speak and interact with peers and the COP28 audience. The office of the COP28 presidency stands ready to assist Ministers of Health to identify speaking opportunities throughout Health Day.

### **Will travel support be provided to Ministers of Health?**

We are expecting member countries to support travel and participation of ministers of health to COP28 to attend the first-ever climate health ministerial on 3 December 2023. However, on a case-by-case basis, requests can be raised to the COP28 team on [health@cop28.com](mailto:health@cop28.com) or WHO where support is needed.

### **Are COP28 badges provided to Ministers of Health?**

Ministers of Health and other national delegates are expected to travel to COP28 as part of their official national delegation to the UNFCCC. Ministers should liaise with their UNFCCC national focal points to secure UNFCCC accreditation and blue zone passes to COP28. An overview of national focal points can be found on the UNFCCC website: <https://unfccc.int/process/parties-non-party-stakeholders/parties/national-focal-point>.