



## World Health Summit 2023 - Statement on Green Health

### Health leaders at the WHS support WHO commitment to build climate resilient, low carbon sustainable health systems (ATACH)

The climate emergency has escalated around the world in 2023 in unprecedented ways as multiple compounding disasters and their health impacts have increased exponentially. It is one of the greatest public health threats of our time. The consequences have included the destruction of livelihoods, increased hunger, human suffering, and death and have led to increasing inequities within and between countries. While the planet experiences floods, heat waves, crop failures, fires, water shortages and more, fossil fuel subsidies have risen to a record high. We urgently call for the implementation of the strategies proposed in the IPCC 2023 report.

The health argument for climate action has become even more tangible and urgent. Staying below the 1.5 °C target, requires a transformational 50% reduction in emissions by 2030—reaching net zero by 2050. Every organization, across every sector, everywhere, needs to do its part; healthcare is no exception. We recognize the first priority of many countries has to be adaptation to protect the people in acute danger, followed by mitigative measures that protect the environment. At present such prioritization is an unfortunate necessity as many of the financial commitments made to support LMIC are yet to be fulfilled.

If the global health sector were a country, it would be the fifth largest greenhouse gas emitter on the planet. **It is our responsibility as health leaders at the World Health Summit to call an end to business as usual in relation to climate action and to position ourselves with determination on the side of health and equity.** We demand that our governments give priority to health system adaptation and commit to zero emission targets for health systems.

**We recognize** that we as health leaders must make a unique and powerful contribution to climate leadership and advocacy by building the collective voice of health professionals to support system-wide initiatives to reduce the climate impact of healthcare and call for wider societal actions that both reduce carbon emissions and improve health. **Every hospital, health practice, public health centre and health professional needs to act and can act.**

**We recognize** that the health sector - national and local – has an important role to

- build better, more climate-resilient and low-carbon health systems; and
- implement public health measures to protect from the range of climate risks to health

- provide evidence and health assessments of the impacts of policy action and
- guide other sectors whose actions impact substantially on health, carbon emissions and climate resilience.

**We recognize** that national and local government health agencies have an important role in leading public health actions to protect from climate risks in key health-determining and carbon-emitting sectors, such as energy, transport, food systems and urban planning, and applying relevant health standards and regulations, for example, on air quality.

As health leaders we will engage fully in relevant national and international climate mechanisms, such as the development of National Action Plans, and nationally determined contributions to the Paris Agreement.

**We encourage** all health leaders to join **The Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health** (<https://www.who.int/initiatives/alliance-for-transformative-action-on-climate-and-health/>), which brings together over 75 countries that have committed to build climate-resilient and low-carbon health systems, together with health practitioners, development partners and technical experts in an open partnership to accelerate climate and health action. We will continue to explore membership for our own organizations and countries.