

### **Joint Declaration**

**of the French Public Health Association, the French Society of Environmental Health, the French Medical Council,**

**supported by their European partners: The European Public Health Association (EUPHA), Standing Committee of European Doctor (CPME), and the European Council of Medical Orders (CEOM)**

**and their international partners: the World Medical Association (WMA), the Health & Environment Alliance (HEAL), and the Conférence Francophone des Ordres des Médecins (CFOM).**

## **Health must be addressed by the International climate conference COP21**

Paris, June 29, 2015

The 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21) will take place in December in Paris. It is an important opportunity to tackle the impact of climate change on health by drafting a genuine universal agreement which would put health to the foreground in the debate on climate change and would reduce the serious health-related risks the world faces today.

The major, future climatic phenomena represent a significant risk both for health as well as for the lives of the most vulnerable people. The consequences on individuals' health will vary substantially depending on their economic, social and cultural background.

Public health actors and the entire global medical community welcome all measures which prevent the degradation caused by climatic events, the impact of which can be observed on a daily basis (floods, storms, desertification, changes to the ecosystem for both flora and fauna – including disease vectors – , extreme weather conditions...), and which prevent the direct and indirect consequences of these impacts on the health of individuals and populations<sup>1</sup>: deaths and medical emergencies, infectious diseases, physical and mental disabilities, breakdowns within the healthcare supply chain and the existing health infrastructure, and mass displacement of populations. Any climate-related action that recognizes these challenges should maintain and improve health, benefit sustainable development and enhance worldwide equity.

The signatories are therefore concerned that the COP21 does not take health measures that are necessary to address climate-related events and consequences sufficiently into account.

On the occasion of this global summit, the signatories want to see reiterated the legitimate role and place of health professionals who are involved at many different levels in providing healthcare for the current and future victims of climate change consequences:

- In their role in the prevention of diseases caused by climate-related disasters and the promotion of public health policy at the service of the patients;
- In their role as healthcare providers for populations in emergency health situations where urgent primary health care interventions are required; and
- In addressing chronic diseases or illnesses caused by climate change.

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the French High Council for Public Health on Climate Change and Health, May 2015.

The healthcare sector, health professionals and especially doctors should take an active role in preparing society for these challenges as well as helping to tackle the consequences.

The official COP21 agenda must therefore increase the focus on health challenges<sup>2</sup> and increase the involvement of health professionals.

**Signatories ask the French authorities to explicitly include health in the final negotiations and commitments of COP21.**



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<sup>2</sup> At an international side event, the International Interdisciplinary Scientific Conference on Climate in July 2015, the Seminar organised by the French Department of Health in June 2015 (Climate, Health, Inequality: Solutions?), and the conference of the French Society of Environmental Health in November 2015.