



World Health
Organization

Western Pacific

Region's leaders discuss need to protect health in relation to climate change and the environment

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The seventieth session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Western Pacific concluded today after discussions on climate change and environmental health.

Climate change poses a vast range of health risks for countries in the Western Pacific Region, from warmer temperatures that increase the range of malaria, dengue and other vector-borne diseases to a rise in waterborne and foodborne diseases associated with extreme weather. Many Pacific island countries and areas are seriously threatened by rising sea levels. And for some Asian countries, pollution and other environmental issues associated with rapid economic development pose serious health risks. In all, about 3.5 million deaths a year in the Region are attributable to avoidable environmental risks. Addressing these threats is also a key priority for WHO's work in the coming five years, as outlined in *For the Future*.

Delegates took note of actions to protect human health from climate change and environmental health threats. This year, the WHO Asia-Pacific Centre for Environment and Health in the Western Pacific Region was established in Seoul, Republic of Korea. Cambodia, Kiribati, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu are working with WHO to make their health systems more climate resilient. Pacific island countries and areas have developed a roadmap to implement the *Pacific Islands Action Plan on Climate Change and Health*. Several countries are

working with WHO to facilitate access to the Green Climate Fund. WHO is also working with countries to improve water and sanitation services in health facilities and strengthen occupational health.

Delegates agreed on the time and place of the seventy-first session of the Regional Committee, which will be held in Japan from 5 to 9 October 2020.

Related links

Climate change and health

[Fact sheet](#)

[Microvideo](#)

Notes to editors

A livestream of the Regional Committee proceedings, official documents, fact sheets and videos on the issues to be discussed can be accessed here:

www.who.int/westernpacific/about/governance/regional-committee/seventieth-session

Updates are being posted on the @WHOWPRO [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#) accounts with the hashtag #RCM70.

Working with 194 Member States across six regions, WHO is the United Nations specialized agency responsible for public health. Each WHO region has its own regional committee—a governing body composed of ministers of health and senior officials from Member States. Each regional committee meets annually.

There are 37 countries and areas in the WHO Western Pacific Region: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, France (*which has responsibility for* French Polynesia, New Caledonia, and Wallis and Futuna), Hong Kong SAR (China), Japan, Kiribati, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Macao SAR (China), Malaysia, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga,

Tuvalu, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (*which has responsibility for* Pitcairn Islands), the United States of America (*which has responsibility for* American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam), Vanuatu, and Viet Nam.