

South East Asia Regional Workshop
« The impact of climate change on health »

Jakarta – 16 to 18 June 2009

Organized by Mr Hervé d’Oriano, Regional Counselor for Health, French Embassy

Terms of Reference

PROJECT version 1

1. Background :

The review of the literature shows that public health impact of climate change has now been scientifically demonstrated, and that it starts to be taken into account by the international community.

Based on several recent examples, Dr Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General, stated on 7 April 2008 during the World Health Day that: “Climate change endangers health... The warming of the planet will be gradual, but the effects of extreme weather events –more storms, floods, droughts and heatwaves – will be more frequent. Both trends can affect some of the most fundamental determinants of health... Although climate change is a global phenomenon, its consequences will not be evenly distributed... Climate change can affect problems that are already huge, largely concentrated in the developing world (...) such as the spread of infectious diseases”.

The international community has become aware of this change, and has initiated actions under the aegis of WHO and other relevant international organisations.

The 193 States represented at the World Health Assembly (WHA) adopted in May 2008 resolution WHA n°61-19 on climate change and health, urging states to take decisive actions in this regard.

This resolution urges the health sector to:

- “ develop adaptation plans to reduce health implications of climate change;
- raise awareness on these implications at the national and global levels;
- draw attention and public action”.

The WHA also urged WHO to develop and strengthen the scientific evidence of the links between climate change and health, and to support developing countries in addressing the implications of climate change on health.

Finally, it urged Member States to:

- Build the capacity of public health leaders to be proactive;
- Strengthen the capacity of health systems to prepare for and respond to natural disasters;
- Promote health sector engagement with other sectors to reduce risks.

2. General overview of the topic and specificities for the region :

Having in mind the above background:

- From the data point of view :
 - Developing countries are the most exposed because they have more fragile systems
 - There are regional specificities related to weather conditions
- As for the strategy to implement :
 - The approach must be in line with a multilateral dynamic
 - By the nature of the problems, the regional dimension is relevant

Based on global data, the situation can be described as below in South-East Asia:

- There are important disparities regarding the levels of development
- Several developing countries face important systemic weaknesses
- As several countries are located in tropical areas, there are specific implications due to climate change
- From an epidemiological point of view, a significant prevalence of infectious diseases can be observed
- The global environmental threat is real

3. Architecture of the regional initiative :

Having in mind the scope and the diversity of the topics, and the small scale of the funding of the initiative, the latter must target efficiency. To this end:

- It must be a practical and a reflection workshop,
- it must target specialists, without being a scientific event,
- it must be focused on the political aspects of the approach, so as to promote leverage and networking,
- but with a scientific ground to help illustrate a reasoning based on an actual fact: the dengue fever case seems to be relevant. Indeed, gathered in Delhi in September 2008 during the WHO SEARO regional committee, 11 South-East Asian Health Ministers adopted a resolution expressing their concerns regarding the resurgence of the dengue fever in the region, the increasing number of epidemics, their transnational nature and the consequences at the international level. Experts see behind this phenomenon the impact of climate change, as it was explained by several presentations during the International Conference on Dengue in Phuket in October 2008, where 1000 specialists from around the world were gathered.

The workshop could be organised as the following:

- Theoretical overview of the topic : French expert: **Mr Jean-François Guégan**, Senior Research Fellow-Director of Research at the French Research Agency for Development.

- Specificities of the region: **Mr. Alexander von Hildebrand**, WHO expert, Regional Advisor, Environmental Health & Climate Change, **WHO, SEARO (Regional Office for South-East Asia)**, New Delhi, India.
- Advocacy for the introduction of health into the global environment thinking
- Scientific illustration based on the Dengue case: **Thai experts from Mahidol University Bangkok.**
- Situation briefing in the region: brief presentation for each country
- Example of a country in advance regarding the implementation of a policy: France + Indonesia + a country part of the region
- Practical work on the definition of a methodology
- Presentation of feedbacks and formulation of recommendations
- Attempt to define a road map

4. Objectives :

Main objectives: 1 year after the WHA resolution:

- Assess progress regarding the level of climate change implications awareness into national health policies, and regarding the level of integration of the health dimension into environmental policies.
- Raise health implications of climate change awareness, and support the development of national policies taking into account this dimension.
- Promote experience and good practices sharing
- Based on the example of more advanced countries, discuss the modalities of developing a regional road map.

Secondary objectives:

- Support the creation of a network of experts at the regional level
- To link national policies with the regional dimension

5. Target participants :

Two participants for each ASEAN member state can be supported on the budget of the workshop.

- 1 senior executive, Director or Deputy in charge of environmental health at the Ministry of Health (or at the Ministry of Environment, depending of the country). Usually, issues related to climate change impact on health are dealt with by environmental health services. However, if this is not the case, the relevant service or experts can be identified.

- 1 scientist or 1 public health practitioner working more specifically on these questions. If the identification of a scientist is difficult in some countries, the delegation can be composed of two representatives of the Ministry.

If French embassies in the region can invite additional experts, this will be most welcomed.

It must be born in mind that the ASEAN region is divided into 2 WHO regions:

- SEARO region (South-East Asia) , regional headquarter in Delhi: Thailand, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Myanmar, and with other countries not part of ASEAN;
- WPRO region (Western Pacific), regional headquarter in Manila: Vietnam, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Malaysia, Philippines, and with other countries not part of ASEAN.

For the identification of the WHO expert, the Jakarta office should be contacted. However, if a regional expertise is required, the two regional headquarters in Delhi an Manila should be contacted.

Updating of the participants:

French Expert:

- **Mr Jean-François Guégan** received his Ph.D. in community ecology and population dynamics of host-parasite interactions in 1990 from the University of Montpellier (France), and carried out his postdoctoral studies with Professor Clive Kennedy at the University of Exeter in Great Britain.

He is currently **Senior Research Fellow-Director of Research at the French Research Agency for Development (I.R.D.)** in the Genetics and Evolution of Infectious Diseases Unit (U.M.R. # 2724) hosted conjointly by I.R.D., C.N.R.S. and the University of Montpellier 1, in Montpellier, Southern France. He is co-directing this research team (around 30 permanent faculty and 20 Master and PhD degrees students) with Dr. François Renaud, and is leading the research group on Systems Dynamics and Infectious Diseases (around 10 people).

He is currently involved in studies on the ecology of infectious diseases, specifically with respect to

- the temporal and spatial dynamics of diseases (pertussis, measles, cholera fever, **dengue fever**), and their associations with climate variability
- the re-emergence of infectious and parasitic diseases (Buruli Ulcer, cholera...) and the linkages between biodiversity alteration and ecosystem changes on disease emergence,
- the macroecology of parasitic and infectious diseases with a special interest in emerging patterns,
- the coevolutionary processes between humans and their parasitic and infectious diseases.

He is associate professor at University of Montpellier 2, in charge of courses on quantitative epidemiology, and global environmental change and health. He is also an associate professor at the new French School of Public Health, where he is in charge of developing an International Center on Globalization and Health. He is an international scientific expert for

the U.N.E.P. Earth System Science Partnership (joined Diversitas, IGBP, WCRP and IHDP programmes) in human health and ecosystem health, and WHO (Global Buruli Ulcer initiative), a member of the scientific council of both Afsset (the French agency for environmental health), and HCSP (the French Council on Public Health). Within the E.D.E.N. (Emerging Diseases in a changing European eNvironment) Integrated Research Programme, he is in charge of studying the linkages between population and community ecology and disease emergence, with the aim to assess on the effects of ecosystem dynamics, and biodiversity composition and changes on disease dynamics.

He is a referee for up to 25 different international journals in epidemiology, parasitology and theoretical ecology (PLoS Biology, Ecology Letters, Trends in Microbiology, EcoHealth, among others), and an associated editor of the international monthly journal Parasitology. He is responsible for the coedition of 5 hard books (Oxford University Press, Springer Verlag, de Boeck) and 3 special issue as a guest editor. He has authored up to 105 articles in international journals (Nature, PloS Biology, PloS Medicine, Current Biology, Trends in Microbiology, Trends in Parasitology, Ecology Letters, American J. Epidemiology, Evolution, Ecology, International Journal of Microbiology, Journal of Evolutionary Biology, Proceedings B, Trends in Parasitology, Parasitology, International Journal of Parasitology, among others) and 60 oral communications (up to 40 as an invited speaker) in international meetings.

Who Experts:

- **Mr. Alexander von Hildebrand**, Regional Advisor, Environmental Health & Climate Change, **WHO, SEARO (Regional Office for South-East Asia)**, New Delhi, India, E-mail: Hildebranda@searo.who.int

He will make his presentation in close collaboration with Dr. Genandrialine Peralta, Regional Advisor in WPRO Region and I am still waiting to hear her response.

WPRO is currently implementing CC&H country level vulnerability assessment and drafting of adaptation plans in 6 countries - Mongolia, Cambodia, Samoa, Papua New Guinea (4 WPRO initiated), China and the Philippines (2 are Spanish MDG assisted). There are 14 experts engaged by WPRO to help these countries but we will only have concrete outputs by the end of the year. There is a mid-term project review in June.

Mr. Alexander von Hildebrand can cover both WPRO and SEARO in the workshop. She will just contribute a few WPRO slides in his presentation since they are both implementing the same Regional Framework for CC&H in Asia-Pacific. If necessary, she can also join the Q & A via telecon link.

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- Representative from **WHO Indonesia**, to be confirmed.

-Indonesian Experts:

1.Dr. Wan Alkadri, MSc, Director of Environmental Health, Directorate General Disease Control & Environmental Health, MoH, Focal Person for CC in the Ministry of Health.

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