Health, environment, climate: an EU agenda to reduce the burden of disease and inequalities

Joint final conference of the Horizon Europe METEOR cluster projects: co-led by BEST-COST & UBDPolicy, with MARCHES, MISTRAL & VALESOR

25 November 2026 | 9:15-17:45 CET | Résidence Palace, Brussels

This event is recognised as an Associated Event of the Irish Presidency of the Council of the European Union 2026

8:45 – 9:15 **Registration and coffee**

9:15 – 9:25 **Welcome**

- Welcoming remarks by **Minister Jennifer Murnane O'Connor**, Irish Minister of State at the Department of Health (video)
- **Welcome by:**
  - **Caroline Costongs**, Director, EuroHealthNet
  - **Carmen Laplaza Santos,** Head of Unit Health Innovations, DG RTD

9:25 – 9:40 **Keynote – Reducing burden of disease, protecting the environment, and ensuring competitiveness: delivering on EU priorities**

- **Pernille Weiss-Ehler**, Cabinet Member of Commissioner Jessika Roswall, Commissioner for the Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy

9:40 – 10:25 **Panel 1: Setting the scene – What is at stake for people's health from pollution and climate threats, especially for vulnerable groups?**

Moderator: Caroline Costongs, Director, EuroHealthNet

- **Leena Ylä-Mononen,** Executive Director, European Environment Agency
- **Robb Butler**, Professor at the London School of Economics and WHO Special Representative for Climate and Health
- **Pernille Weiss-Ehler**, Cabinet Member of Commissioner Jessika Roswall, Commissioner for the Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy
- **Marcin Stoczkiewicz**, Director, Institute of Environmental Protection, Poland

10:25 – 10:45 **Keynote – Translating cutting-edge research into policy: lessons learnt from the METEOR cluster**

- **Mark Nieuwenhuijsen**, Director, Urban Planning, Environment and Health Initiative, ISGlobal

10:45 – 11:15 **Coffee break**

11:15 – 12:40 **Panel 2: From research to impact at local level – Scaling up good practices, tools and key research results for healthier cities and communities**

Moderator: Anne Stauffer, Deputy Director, HEAL

- UBDPolicy: **Sasha Khomenko**, Postdoctoral Researcher on Nature and Urban Health, Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal) – *Transferring and scaling good practices to reduce the environmental burden of disease at urban level*
- MISTRAL: **Rodolfo Sardone**, Head of Unit of Research Innovation and Technology Transfer, Urban Health Center, Local Health Authority of Taranto, Italy – *Transforming complex urban systems into predictive intelligence to build healthier, more resilient cities*
- MARCHES: **Jörg Schullehner,** Associate Professor in Public Health, Aarhus University – *Integrating economic and health modelling in impact assessments at local level for cleaner drinking water*

Panel discussion:

Researchers from UBDPolicy, MISTRAL and MARCHES are joined by:

- **Maria Pilar Aguar Fernandez,** Director Directorate "People", DG RTD
- **Karen Vancluysen,** Secretary General, POLIS
- Representative from Brussels city (tbc)

12:40 – 13:40 **Lunch**

13:40 – 15:05 **Panel 3: From research to policy and action – Cost-effective approaches to reduce health inequalities from environmental stressors**

Moderator: Alba Godfrey, Senior Project Coordinator, EuroHealthNet

- BEST-COST: **Brecht Devleesschauwer**, Head of Service Health Information, Sciensano – *Policy tools to tackle social inequalities in environmental burden of disease*
- VALESOR: **Ståle Navrud**, Professor in Environmental and Resource Economics, Norwegian University of Life Sciences – *Importance of economic valuation of health impacts from environmental stressors for decision-making*

Panel discussion:

Researchers from BEST-COST and VALESOR are joined by:

- **Frank Siebern-Thomas**, Heat of Unit Green Transition, DG EMPL

- **Gerardo Sanchez,** Expert in Environment, Health and Wellbeing, European Environment Agency
- **Ariane Vander Stappen**, Head of Unit - Antimicrobial Resistance, Human nutrition, DG SANTE
- **Zorana Jovanovic Andersen**, Professor of Environmental Epidemiology and Chair Elect of Advocacy Council of the European Respiratory Society

15:05 – 15:15 **Healthy break**

15:15 – 16:15 **Panel 4: Moving ahead through EU policy – Learning from research to invest in people's health, reduce disease cost, and lessen inequalities: which EU agenda to 2030?**

Moderator: Anne Stauffer, Deputy Director, HEAL

- **Sir Andy Haines**, Professor of Environmental Change and Public Health, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine & Chief Scientist of the WHO Pan-European Commission on Climate and Health
- **Veronica Manfredi**, Director for Zero Pollution, Water Resilience & Green Urban Transition, DG ENV
- **Chiara Martinelli**, Director, Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe
- **Stephanny Ulivieri**, Secretary General, Youth Environment Europe

16:15 – 16:25 **Closing remarks**

- **Sir Andy Haines**, Professor of Environmental Change and Public Health, London Schools of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine & Chief Scientist of the WHO Pan-European Commission on Climate and Health

16:25 – 16:30 **Closing by conference co-chairs**

- **Caroline Costongs**, Director, EuroHealthNet
- **Anne Stauffer**, Deputy Director, HEAL

16:30 **Reception**

METEOR is a cluster of five Horizon Europe projects researching the health impacts of environmental stressors, such as air and noise pollution, and chemicals, and related socioeconomic costs. Together they lay out abroad and detailed view of how health is impacted by the environment and suggest policy recommendations to protect our health and the planet.

Funded by the European Union

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