

MEETING REPORT



Submitted by:

**The Ministry of Health and The Ministry of Environment and Forestry
Republic of Indonesia
(Fifth Chair of the Asia Pacific Regional Forum on Health and Environment)**

In collaboration with:

*Regional Office for the Asia Pacific,
World Health Organization – South-East Asia Regional Office (SEARO) and Western
Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) - the United Nations Environment Programme
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP ROAP)*

INTRODUCTION

1. WHO SEARO, WHO ROAP, and UNEP ROAP initiated the Regional Forum on Environment and Health, on voluntary basis, in the Southeast and East Asian Region in 2004 with members from 10 Southeast Asian countries and 4 East Asia countries. In 2016, the Regional Forum was renamed the **Asia-Pacific Regional Forum on Health and Environment (APRFHE) to provide more open membership for the Member States of WHO SEARO, WHO WPRO, and UNEP ROAP.**
2. The overall goal of the Regional Forum is to create a platform for national and regional action to enhance and safeguard health and the environment and promote sustainable development.
3. It aims to strengthen the cooperation of the ministries responsible for environment and health within the countries and across the region by providing a mechanism for sharing knowledge and experiences, improving policy and regulatory frameworks at the national and regional levels, and promoting the implementation of integrated environmental health strategies and regulations. The specific objectives of the Regional Forum are to:
 - a. identify and address priority environment and health issues that require regional action,
 - b. facilitate dialogue, exchange of knowledge and best practices to promote sustainable development in the environment and health,
 - c. develop and sustain mechanisms for collaborative action, and
 - d. mobilize material, human and technical resources to support work on environment and health.
4. To date, five chairships have led the Regional Forum: (1) the Kingdom of Thailand, (2) the Republic of Korea, (3) Malaysia, (4) the Republic of the Philippines, and (5) the Republic of Indonesia.
5. As the current chair, Indonesia, presided over by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Environment and Forestry, is continuing the momentum from Philippines chairship of APRFHE with the theme, "The Role of Strategic Health and Environment on National Development to Achieve Sustainable Development Goals."
6. On 22-23 November 2023, Indonesia, in collaboration with WHO SEARO, WHO WPRO, and UNEP ROAP, organized the 11th High-Level Officials Meeting (11th HLOM).

PARTICIPANTS

7. The meeting was held in hybrid, attended by 62 participants including the national delegates of member countries from Brunei Darussalam, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, and Thailand. Non-member countries from Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste sent the

participants either in-person or online. Observers from the U.K. Health Security Agency, and U.K. Mission to ASEAN was also present. The secretariat comprised 49 persons from the Ministry of Health Indonesia, Ministry of Environment and Forestry Indonesia, WHO and UNEP. The list of participants is provided in Annex 1.

SESSION 1: WELCOMING REMARKS

8. The Meeting commenced with welcoming remarks from H.E. Dante Saksono Harbuwono, Vice Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia. He welcomed distinguished delegates to the 11th HLOM–APRFHE, highlighting, amongst others, the Earth's diverse species and their interconnectedness. He underscored the urgent need for collective efforts to address climate change and framed the Meeting within the ongoing spirit of fostering initiatives to mitigate environmental and health challenges in the Region.
9. At the opening session, Mr. Sigit Reliantoro, Director-General of Environmental Pollution and Degradation Control, Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia, welcomed participants to the Meeting, acknowledging the commitment of participants attending the Meeting and the leadership of WHO and UNEP in furthering discussions on health and environmental issues. He emphasized the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution on human health, drawing lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic on the intricate linkages between people and the planet. He also underlined the need for stronger actions and collaboration by building on our lesson-learned, and successes in dealing with various challenges.
10. Dr. Momoe Takeuchi, Deputy WHO Representative for Indonesia stressed the importance of collective awareness to address environmental health issues. She highlighted the environmental risks, impacts of climate change, and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Asia-Pacific region. She called for transformative actions and underlined WHO's commitment to providing technical support and expertise.
11. Ms. Marlene Nilsson, Deputy Regional Director of the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific expressed her appreciation for the Government of Indonesia for its support on the Regional Forum, the participants' attendance and the Regional Forum's continuation after the leadership of the Philippines. Ms. Nilsson highlighted environmental health problems in Asia and the Pacific, including biodiversity loss, air pollution, and ecosystem degradation, emphasizing their direct impact on human health and the emergence of infectious diseases

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

12. The Meeting adopted the agenda as follows:

Welcoming Remarks

Session 1 - Opening Session and Agenda Overview

- Opening and Introduction by Chair
- Adoption of Agenda
- Update of the APRFHE

Session 2 - Strategic Focus and Operational Framework

- 2.1 Governance of the APRFHE, Financial Matters and Monitoring Mechanism
- 2.2 Strategic Issues and Technical Areas Relevant to the APRFHE
- 2.3 Mechanisms of the TWGs

Session 3 - Workplan of APRFHE, Fifth Ministerial Meeting, Way Forward

- 3.1 APRFHE Workplan and Chairship Time Period
- 3.2 Selection Process for the Next Chair of APRFHE
- 3.3 Preparation of the 12th HLOM and 5th MM Preparation to be held in 2024

Session 4 - Recap and Closing Session

- 4.1 Recap of the Forum and Way Forward

Closing Ceremony

UPDATES OF THE REGIONAL FORUM

13. Updates from the Fourth Chair of APRFHE

Dr. Isagani Potes, Head Executive Assistant of the Environmental Management Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Philippines, updated the accomplishments of the Regional Forum during their Fourth Chair of the APRFHE. Dr Potes highlighted some pending works required to be addressed in the current Regional Forum chairship, such as the Chairs of the TWGs and membership of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iran.

He informed that the Philippines organized the 4th Ministerial Meeting (MM), conducted in October 2016, in Manila with a three-year term of chairship, and 51 countries and territories were invited to join the APRFHE. He updated us on regional advocacy plans, inter-boundary issues, and grassroots model project proposals in Philippines in response to the Manila Declaration. He also shared some lessons learned and the best practices gained in chairing the Regional Forum.

14. Updates from the Fifth Chair of APRFHE

Mr. Donal Simanjuntak, Head of the Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Unit, Environmental Health Directorate, Ministry of Health, has updated the forum on Indonesia's work as the Fifth Chair of the APRFHE.

He briefly explained the history of the Regional Forum, its membership, and chairship. Under Indonesia chairship, he highlighted that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many activities under the work plan have been affected, and hence, many activities

are still ongoing. Mr. Donal informed several activities that were progressed, such as a kick-off meeting, TWGs meeting, the first joint secretariat meeting, and preparatory meetings of the 11th HLOM, whereas the other progressed events included the second joint secretariat meeting, the 12th HLOM, and the 5th MM. He has also highlighted other challenges in chairing the APRFHE, including demand on solid coordination, financial and human resources, and integrated knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation system-

At this agenda, Indonesia proposed an updated work plan that would be undertaken during the rest of the chairship period.

OVERVIEW OF THE SECRETARIAT SUPPORT TO THE REGIONAL FORUM

15. Presentation by UNEP ROAP

Dr. Mitsugu Saito from UNEP ROAP presented an overview of the Secretariat's support to the Regional Forum. He highlighted the Regional Forum's structure and Secretariat's functions, emphasizing some reforms such as geographic coverage expansion, TWGs operational modalities, and digitalization. The Secretariat's support included advisory roles, work plan implementation, and the organization of global events interconnected with TWGs' activities.

Dr. Mitsugu Saito also informed about the dedicated website for the Regional Forum.

16. Presentation by WHO

On behalf of WHO-SEARO and WPRO, Dr. Nasir Hassan provided an overview of WHO's role as the United Nations-specialized agency responsible for international public health with 194 member states. He detailed WHO-SEARO and WPRO focus on environmental health issues in both regions. He then emphasized that the Regional Forum aligns with the strategic actions of WHO WPRO and SEARO, specifically for SEARO - the Malé Declaration and the Regional Plan of Action for the WHO Global Strategy on Health, Environment and Climate Change 2020-2030, and For WPRO – the Climate Change and Environment (CCE) Thematic Priority and the Western Pacific Regional Framework for Action on Health and Environment on a Changing Planet.

He emphasized the continued support of WHO to the Regional Forum, including collaboration with partners and ongoing efforts.

SESSION 2: STRATEGIC FOCUS AND OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

17. SESSION 2.1 GOVERNANCE OF THE REGIONAL FORUM, FINANCIAL MATTERS AND MONITORING MECHANISM

Dr. Nasir Hassan presented on Governance of the Asia Pacific Regional Forum on Health, Financial Matters, and Monitoring Mechanisms.

Dr. Nasir Hassan emphasized the need for the Regional Forum to follow the success of the European Environment and Health Process. He underlined governance issues, the importance of values, and the inclusive participation of other sectors such as the World Bank, ADB, ILO, UNICEF, etc.

Participants engaged in discussions around the Regional Forum's relevancy, strengthening mechanisms, finance, monitoring, and evaluation system.

Interventions were noted from Brunei Darussalam, Thailand, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and TWGs in response to Dr. Nasir Hasan's presentation:

- 1) Brunei Darussalam commended Indonesia for hosting the 11th HLOM and stressed the importance of clarity in the monitoring and reporting mechanism. They suggested periodic updates, TWG support, and effective work plan implementation.
- 2) Thailand emphasized the need for international cooperation to address environmental health problems, focusing on a common vision between health and the environment.
- 3) Indonesia reiterated the significance of NEHAP, the need for a systematic monitoring mechanism, a detailed knowledge network, and efficient TWGs implementation. They called for a systematic and objective approach to assess the Regional Forum's effectiveness.
- 4) The Republic of Korea acknowledged the Regional Forum's presence and suggested reviewing its governance structure, supporting and enhancing the cooperative framework.
- 5) Japan appreciated the focus on the interlinkage between health and the environment and proposed attention to specific issues.
- 6) Philippines recognized the transformative actions demanded in all TWGs, citing the Regional Forum's role in updating their NEHAP.
- 7) Sri Lanka emphasized the need for advanced mitigation and adaptation measures for climate change, requesting a revision of the Regional Forum's governance structure.
- 8) Co-chair TWG on Chemicals, Waste, and Health sought information on the Regional Forum's work plan progress and specific documents used to encourage member states' participation in the Regional Forum.

Secretariat underlined the important issues as below:

- 9) The Secretariat underscored the importance of interlinking environmental health issues with climate change, seeking recommendations for restructuring governance and emphasizing the need for financial resources.

- 10) The Secretariat highlighted the imminent mainstreaming of climate change and health during COP28 and urged the participation of Pacific Islands in the Regional Forum.
- 11) The Secretariat reiterated that the Regional Forum may invite international agencies to collaborate.
- 12) There was a clear commitment to reinvigorate the APRFHE efforts in addressing environmental health issues in the Region. Emphasizing the pivotal role of the Regional Forum, participants reiterated its significance as a platform for delivering recommendations to environment and health ministers. The aim was to foster synergy among existing environmental health initiatives, avoiding duplication and streamlining collective efforts.
- 13) Acknowledging the need for restructuring governance and establishing a monitoring mechanism.
- 14) A crucial financial aspect was also highlighted, specifically mentioning that the Regional Forum required minimal funds for its operationalization.
- 15) Recognizing the opportunity posed by the pandemic, there was an emphasis on the importance of online meetings and fostering international collaborations with relevant alliances.
- 16) Looking ahead to COP28, participants were informed that climate change and health would be prominently featured in a dedicated session, underscoring the global importance of the issues discussed.
- 17) The call for a shared vision was reiterated, with a specific invitation extended to Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Timor-Leste to join the Regional Forum. Noteworthy was the encouragement for Pacific Islands to actively participate in the Regional Forum, emphasizing inclusivity and collaboration.

In summary, the meeting reaffirmed the Regional Forum's role as a voluntary platform, bringing together numerous international agencies to address pressing environmental health issues on a global scale collaboratively.

18. SESSION 2.2: STRATEGIC ISSUES AND TECHNICAL AREAS RELEVANT TO THE REGIONAL FORUM

Mr. Sigit Reliantoro from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia, chaired Session 2.2 on Strategic Issues and Technical Areas Relevant to the Regional Forum. Three emerging issues are relevant to the APRFHE:

(1) One Health

Dr. Sally Edwards from WHO WPRO presented an overview of One Health in the Asia-Pacific Region. Dr. Sally Edwards highlighted the increasing global interaction of the human-animal-environmental interface and the political commitment to One Health. She detailed the Quadripartite on One Health's Joint Plan of Action, emphasizing Action Track 6 on Integrating the Environment into One Health. Dr. Sally Edwards also informed participants about the strengthened Quadripartite on

One Health, focusing on Action Track 6 and the Quadripartite Coordination for One Health in the Asia Pacific Region.

Dr. Imran Pambudi, Director of Infectious Disease Prevention and Control, Ministry of Health, Indonesia, presented on Health and Environment Cooperation in One Health Initiative. Dr. Pambudi outlined Indonesia's actions in One Health implementation, emphasizing multi sectoral coordination, surveillance, risk reduction, and monitoring.

(2) Climate change, Health and COP28:

Dr. Rasheedd Hussain from WHO WPRO presented an overview of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change 28th Conference of Parties. Dr. Rasheed Hussain highlighted COP28's aim as a watershed moment for climate and health, mentioning the COP28 Declaration on Climate and Health and related events.

(3) Other Health and Environment Agenda:

Dr. Mustaq Memon, Regional Coordinator of Chemicals and Pollution Action Sub-Programme of UNEP ROAP, presented an overview of Other Health and Environment Agendas. They are as follows:

Plastic Treaty: Global efforts to combat plastic pollution and its detrimental impacts on the environment and human health have been spearheaded by international initiatives such as the Basel Convention, with prominent leadership from the UNEP. These initiatives aim to advocate for the sustainable management of plastic waste, aiming to mitigate the adverse environmental and health consequences associated with plastic pollution. As a significant player in these efforts, the UNEP has been actively involved in shaping strategies for the responsible handling of plastic waste on a global scale.

Air Pollution and Health: Air pollution, stemming from household and outdoor sources, has become a major global health concern, contributing to 7 million premature deaths annually. Its effects extend beyond respiratory issues, impacting chronic diseases like lung cancer, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. Particularly alarming is its disproportionate impact on low and middle-income countries, primarily in the Asia Pacific and Africa, where urbanization intensifies emissions. While progress has been made in some regions, challenges persist, with economic consequences estimated at \$8.1 trillion globally. Air pollution affects vulnerable populations, especially children, and has far-reaching ecological implications, including threats to food and water security and contributions to climate change.

Chemicals and Health: Chemicals, essential for various aspects of modern life, contribute significantly to global innovation, trade, employment, and economic growth, with the chemical industry surpassing USD 5 trillion in 2017. While crucial in sustainable development and potential contributions to the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), many daily chemicals adversely affect health and the environment. Hazardous chemicals and pollutants continue to be released into the environment, threatening the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment. Although some Member States in the Asia Pacific region have signed Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) addressing risks associated with certain chemicals, many important ones remain unregulated, necessitating increased multilateral action. Despite commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 and establishing the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) in 2006, the Global Chemicals Outlook II in 2019 indicated that the goal to minimize adverse chemical impacts would not be achieved by 2020. Hazardous chemicals continue to pose risks, requiring urgent and more ambitious worldwide action. The time-bound nature of SAICM led to the need for a new initiative, culminating in the 5th meeting of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5) in 2023. Adopting the Global Framework for Chemicals, the Bonn Declaration, and the Global Framework for Chemicals Fund marked a transformative shift. The new framework identifies five strategic objectives: establishing legal frameworks, comprehensive knowledge generation, addressing concerns, implementing safer alternatives, and enhancing implementation through resource mobilization.

Interventions were noted from Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia, and responses from the Secretariat:

- 1) Brunei Darussalam expressed commitment to the One Health Initiative and its regional agenda, emphasizing the need for a well-coordinated, multisectoral approach.
- 2) Japan advocated for national and global cooperation across sectors, expressing concerns about issues such as AMR and supporting the One Health Approach.
- 3) Philippines shared their initiatives on One Health under the management of relevant departments and expressed support for the proposed policies.
- 4) Thailand proposed the integration of the environmental sector into One Health and requested climate change research.
- 5) Indonesia called for strong collaboration to address climate change and health issues, proposing synergies among TWGs and the development of a reporting mechanism.
- 6) Malaysia supported One Health initiatives and the AMR action plan as part of their initiatives.
- 7) The Secretariat reiterated the importance of cooperation and collaboration in strategic issues and technical areas, emphasizing the need for regular updates and information sharing.

In summary, the meeting intended to accept one health as the new strategic issue and technical area relevant to the regional forum.

19. SESSION 2.3: MECHANISMS OF THE TWGs

Dr. Nasir Hasan from WHO SEARO gave a short presentation on the TWGs Mechanism. He briefly explained the current status of TWGs, five of which were at the 10th HLOM and expanded into eight TWGs. He mentioned the chairs and the Secretariat's roles in managing the TWGs and the uniqueness of the TWGs' roles and functions. He continued briefing the participants on TWGs chairs, co-chairs, members, and operationalization (funding). He also welcomed other platforms and initiatives to collaborate, such as ASEAN Secretariat, WHO Regional Initiatives, UNEP Regional Initiatives, and other global initiatives.

The Meeting noted a presentation from Dr. Mitsugu Saito from UNEP ROAP on the Mechanism to Strengthen TWGs. He mentioned that the Framework for Cooperation was adopted in 2013 by revising and superseding its original governance mechanism, and TWGs worked independently without formal binding to the Chair and the Secretariat. He noted that at the 10th HLOM, there was a demand to prepare the term of reference (TOR) for the reformed TWGs with these five-year chairships. He highlighted the functions of knowledge networks, especially TWGs, in which only one active TWG, four inactive TWGs, and three abeyant TWGs existed. He also talked about the drafted TOR that served as the baseline of individual TOR of each TWG, with several points to be considered and showcased two necessary annexes of the working document, especially the proposed TWG TOR.

Interventions were noted from Indonesia, TWG Chemicals, Waste and Health, the Republic of Korea, TWG on WASH, and Thailand:

- 1) Indonesia recommended evaluating the effectiveness of current TWGs, streamlining and simplifying them, encouraging their activation, and boosting efficiency.
- 2) TWG on Chemicals, Waste, and Health highlighted their activeness for the past months and in developing the work plan with possible extensions for the next five years. They wished not to combine the TWGs and waited for the finalized TOR for the MM consideration, not making it prescriptive. They also expected the development of a reporting mechanism for TWGs, requested the Secretariat to include their activities progress in the MM and for the information sharing platform, and were also happy to share their outcomes on the website without any extra administrative burdens and make them with simple administrative procedures.
- 3) Thailand agreed on the themes under TWG on HIA, emphasizing the importance of commencing activities post-pandemic and requesting mechanisms and financing.
- 4) The Republic of Korea requested clarification on the operation and procedures of chaired TWGs, TOR, guidelines, and time for work plan development.
- 5) TWG on WASH expressed difficulties with the proposal to merge TWGs, citing interlinkage issues.
- 6) Indonesia proposed the urgency of evaluating TWGs, streamlining, and simplifying them. They suggested merging TWG 1 & 7, TWG 2, 3, and 6 into TWG on One Health, maintaining TWG 4 & 5, and removing TWG 8.

- 7) Indonesia reiterated the importance of improving and engaging TWG members, conducting stakeholder analysis, and narrowing down the theme under TWG WASH.
- 8) The Secretariat responded, recommending non-prescriptive yet comprehensive TOR, focusing on active TWGs, caution about private sector members, and avoiding duplication in work plans.
- 9) The Philippines raised concerns about merging TWGs, especially TWG on HIA with TWG on Air Quality and Sustainable Healthy City.
- 10) The Secretariat responded, acknowledging concerns and recommending a focus on active TWGs, with an emphasis on moving forward.
- 11) TWG on HIA agreed to focus on active TWGs and requested not to combine them. They emphasized maintaining TWG on HIA, TWG on Chemicals, Waste, and Health, and TWG on Climate Change and Health.
- 12) Japan supported the reactivation of TWG on Climate Change and Health and emphasized that countries should not be forced to participate in TWGs.
- 13) Secretariat caution regarding the inclusion of the private sector as associate members in the Technical Working Groups - the need to balance the involvement of stakeholders while ensuring that the objectives and integrity of the TWGs remain intact.
- 14) For TWGs to conduct a stakeholder analysis to identify roles and contributions of members in TWGs, emphasizing the need for synergy in their efforts and avoiding duplication within TWG work plans.
- 15) Collective call to consider the funding mechanism to explore viable funding options.
- 16) The idea of organizing back-to-back meetings with regional events to enhance efficiency was proposed.
- 17) The meeting extended a warm invitation to non-member countries, encouraging them to submit letters of interest to participate in the Regional Forum, thus fostering a more inclusive and collaborative approach.

SESSION 3: WORK PLAN OF REGIONAL FORUM, CHAIRSHIP SELECTION, AND FIFTH MINISTERIAL MEETING

20. SESSION 3.1: REGIONAL FORUM WORK PLAN AND CHAIRSHIP TIME PERIOD

The Meeting discussed Session 3 on the Work Plan of the Regional Forum, Chairship Selection, and the Fifth Ministerial Meeting, and it was led by Ir. Sigit Reliantoro, M.Sc. from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia.

The Meeting noted the presentation of Dr Khoiri Jinan from the Ministry of Health on the recall of the TWGs' strengthening mechanism proposal. He requested to revisit the composition of the current TWGs, proposed retaining five active TWGs and one new TWG and removed three inactive TWGs. He also stressed the objective of the new TWG on One Health. He also stated the importance of the efficiency, effectiveness, and maximization of the TWGs' functions and works.

The Meeting noted the presentation from Dra. C.H. Nety Widayati, M.T., Director of Directorate General of Pollution and Environmental Damage Control, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia.

She showcased two work plans endorsed in the 10th HLOM and the 11th HLOM. She revealed some outputs under the 10th HLOM-endorsed work plan, including the 11th HLOM, the 12th HLOM, and the 5th MM, Review of the Regional Forum 2017-2019, the Regional Forum Workshop on NEHAP, EHCP, and EHDs, the TWGs Meetings, the Scientific Meeting, the Advisory Board Meetings, and Other Actions in TWGs.

She also read the proposed work plan, including the 1st and 2nd Joint Secretariat Meeting, the 11th HLOM, the 12th HLOM, the 5th MM, the Regional Forum Workshop on NEHAP, EHCP, and EHDs, the Workshop in NEHAP Development, the Scientific Panel Meeting, TWGs Meeting, Framework for Cooperation Aligned with the Current Structure, Membership Extension, Operational Guidance, Collaboration with other foras, Communication Tools and Materials, and Monitoring, Reporting, and Handover Arrangement.

In summary, the Regional Forum work plan was, in principle, approved. Its TWG work plans annexed to the Regional Forum work plan will be revised or developed for five years, and the revised work plan will be presented to all Member Countries for online approval in January 2024.

Presentations of TWG Representatives on the Work Plan:

(1) TWG on Air Quality and Health:

The TWG, co-chaired by the Republic of Korea and Thailand, primarily focused on transboundary air quality issues during the discussion. They underscored the importance of evidence-based policy formulation and highlighted their achievements in the past year.

The Chair proposed drafting a policy brief on air pollution and health, emphasizing the significance of air quality monitoring.

The TWG put forth recommendations to prioritize evidence-based policies. They stressed the importance of securing the budget for their initiatives and discussed strategies to develop a research framework. The TWG recommended further collaboration with stakeholders to enhance air quality monitoring efforts.

(2) TWG on Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH):

The TWG WASH, which Japan and Indonesia co-chair, discussed the importance of water, sanitation, and hygiene in healthcare facilities. They delved into challenges, such as inadequate clean water supply, sanitation issues, and the impacts of climate change and environmental factors. The TWG presented a comprehensive work plan

covering assessment, capacity-building, technology adoption, policy advocacy, and knowledge sharing.

The TWG recommended a systematic approach to address WASH challenges in healthcare facilities. They highlighted the need for innovative solutions, technology adoption, and active policy advocacy. The group is seeking assistance from the Secretariat in managing meeting arrangements.

(3) TWG on Chemicals, Waste, and Health:

The TWG on Chemicals, Waste, and Health, co-chaired by Japan and Thailand, presented a work plan from January to December 2024, included a background discussion on the strong commitment of the Environment Ministers of G7 regarding pollution reduction and exposure. The work plan outlined activities such as organizing quarterly webinars, addressing lead pollution, and expanding the coverage of the iCAPS initiative.

The TWG strongly urged seeking financial sources, especially from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Thailand expressed full commitment to accelerating the activities of this TWG, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts.

(4) TWG on Climate Change and Health:

The TWG on Climate Change and Health, chaired by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) of the Philippines, focused on the loss and damage to the environment posed by climate change. They discussed the legal basis, the Warsaw International for Loss and Damage, and highlighted the economic losses due to climate change in the Asia-Pacific region. The work plan included raising awareness, establishing expert groups, and mobilizing partners.

The TWG proposed several recommendations, including the need for funding, online workshops, engagement of associate members, and collaboration with international fora and events. They emphasized the importance of addressing loss and damage due to rapid-onset and slow-onset events.

(5) TWG on Health Impact Assessment (HIA):

The TWG on HIA, co-chaired by Thailand and Malaysia, discussed the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) background and its application in the Asia-Pacific region. They highlighted the objectives of promoting knowledge sharing and capacity building. The work plan included updating membership, activating a network website, conducting meetings, surveys, and training workshops.

The TWG recommended mobilizing funding from the Regional Forum Secretariat, Member States, and other stakeholders. They emphasized the importance of a systematic approach to promote HIA knowledge and experience sharing.

(6) TWG on One Health

The meeting has agreed to establish a new TWG on One Health to be chaired by the Republic of Indonesia.

Interventions from Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, and Thailand included requests for input on the Regional Forum's work plan, prioritizing high-impact concerns, focusing on SDGs, and reflecting NEHAP in accomplishments:

- 1) Dr. Khoiri Jinan presented a revised proposal for TWGs' mechanism, roles, and functions, preferring the continuation of five TWGs, establishing one new TWG (One Health), and renaming TWG on Ecosystem and Health.
- 2) TWG on Chemicals, Waste, and Health expressed contentment with the revised TWG structure. The Secretariat recommended replacing TWG on Ecosystem and Health with TWG on One Health, emphasizing Indonesia's potential chairing.
- 3) Dr. Mitsugu Saito from UNEP ROAP presented the TOR on the TWGs.
- 4) The Secretariat acknowledged receiving work plans from TWG on WASH, TWG on Chemicals, Waste, and Health, and TWG on HIA. Pending written work plans' circulation for input and recommendations, they would be annexed to the Regional Forum's work plan.
- 5) Suggestions from WHO WPRO, UNEP ROAP, and Indonesia included:
 - incorporating health issues in TWG on Climate Change and Health,
 - strengthening linkages between environment and health,
 - clarifying the following steps for submitting the work plan.

21. SESSION 3.2: SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE NEXT CHAIR OF REGIONAL FORUM

The Meeting noted a presentation from Dr. Mitsugu Saito from UNEP ROAP on Working Document 3.2 of the Selection Process for the Next Chair of the Regional Forum. He informed that the Regional Forum chair was voluntary, and five chairships period existed. He also informed the expansion of the membership, and the members shall elect a chair and vice-chair to preside over the proceedings of the meetings. He also explained the election process of the Chair, the roles of the Chair, suggested arrangements, and other annexes.

He emphasized that the Chair could partner with other countries to co-host the MM and HLOM. He stressed the unclear operation of the Scientific Panel and requested the countries to consider the benefits of being the Chair or Vice-chair.

22. PREPARATION OF THE 12TH HLOM AND 5TH MM PREPARATION TO BE HELD IN 2024

The Meeting noted a presentation from Dr Khoiri Jinan from the Indonesian Ministry of Health on Preparing the 12th HLOM and the 5th MM in 2024. He informed about the objectives of hosting these events.

He also mentioned the participants of these meetings, including ministers, high-level officials, the Secretariat, and observers. Regarding the 5th MM and the 12th

HLOM, they provided some proposed activities in which the 12th HLOM would be done within two days and back-to-back in September or October 2024.

The Meeting noted interventions from TWG on Chemicals, Waste, and Health, Indonesia, UNEP ROAP, the Philippines, Japan, WHO Timor Leste, and the Secretariat:

- 1) TWG on Chemicals, Waste, and Health - asked whether these events would be in conjunction with the other big events.
- 2) Indonesia proposed that the Meeting would be conducted back-to-back events, noted that the schedule of these events was still in discussion with its initial proposal on September/October 2024, noted the importance of the long preparation time for these meetings and requested to conduct consultation meetings with the Secretariat and other member states.
- 3) UNEP ROAP recommended combining these events with the big events in Indonesia, such as the 10th World Water Forum in May 2024.
- 4) The Philippines asked if the 5th MM would be carried out hybrid or face-to-face.
- 5) Japan announced that regional countries would have international events in September and October 2024 and requested that the dates of these events be defined accordingly.
- 6) WHO Timor Leste requested to know how to become a member of these events, and its follow-up criteria, suggested considering the engagement of international agencies.
- 7) The Secretariat responded that the invitation would be from Indonesia and could be extended to other countries for inclusive engagement.

SESSION 4: RECAP AND WAY FORWARDS

23. SESSION 4.1: MEETING RECAP AND WAY FORWARDS

The Meeting noted a meeting recap and way forward presentation delivered by Dr Nasir Hasan from WHO SEARO. The Meeting noted the following points:

- 1) Recognized countries attended the 11th HLOM, both members and non-members physical and virtual method, including Brunei Darussalam, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea, Philippines, Maldives, Timor Leste, and Sri Lanka.
- 2) Thanked the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, especially the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, as the Fifth Chair of the Regional Forum for hosting the 11th HLOM and very warm hospitality extended to all delegates and the excellent facilities provided throughout the Meeting.
- 3) **Current Governance of the Regional Forum:**
 - voiced the importance of health and environmental issues in the Region and countries,

- acknowledged the Regional Forum play an important role as a platform to deliberate environmental and health issues at the national, regional, and global levels.

4) Restructuring the Governance of the Regional Forum:

1. recognized the momentum of the Regional Forum was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Regional Forum activities which was planned at the 10th High Level Official Meeting were also significantly affected,
2. acknowledged the challenges faced by the Regional Forum as elaborated in the working document on governance, monitoring mechanisms, and financial resources to operate the Regional Forum,
3. recommended for restructuring of the Framework for Cooperation of the Regional Forum, including the knowledge network and the scientific panels, with the objectives to improve the overall effectiveness of the Regional Forum and proposed the following steps forward:
 - the Secretariat, in close collaboration with the Chair, will prepare a revised Framework for Cooperation and working documents and will then share and circulate with all Members for reading, comments, and inputs in advance;
 - the Revised Framework for Cooperation will be discussed further at a Joint Secretariat Meeting to be Chaired by Indonesia in early 2024. Past chairs of the Regional Forum: Thailand, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, the fifth Chair, other potential members, and Chairs of TWGs should be part of the Joint Secretariat Meeting.
 - the draft will then be presented at the 12th HLOM of the Regional Forum and tabled at the 5th Ministerial Meeting in 2024 for approval.

5) Mechanism of Conducting Meeting:

1. supported the option that meetings related to the Regional Forum and the TWGs can be carried out face-to-face as well as in hybrid forms for cost efficiency,
2. encouraged the Thematic Working Groups to meet at least once throughout their chairship period, preferably once a year.

6) Scientific Panel:

1. acknowledged that the Scientific Panel has not been addressed adequately at the 11th HLOM,
2. propose the Chair and Secretariat reviewing the Scientific Panel's TOR in the Regional Forum Framework for Cooperation and proposing membership.

7) Monitoring Mechanism:

1. acknowledged the absence of clear mechanisms to measure or monitor the progress of the Regional Forum since its inception in 2004,
2. the Secretariat, in close collaboration with the Chair, will prepare a proposal to monitor the progress of the Regional Forum and will then share it with all Members for comments and inputs,

3. encouraged TWGs to start submitting their reports to record their activities and achievements with a systematic and robust approach.

8) Financial Mechanism:

1. acknowledged a lack of financial support hampers most Regional Forum activities,
2. thanked the government of Japan, which has contributed funding to support the Regional Forum through UNEP ROAP. Suggested UNEP ROAP to communicate with the Chair and Secretariat on the fund already provided by the Government of Japan,
3. enhanced collaboration on funding future activities of Regional Forum and TWGs through the following options:
 - voluntary contributions from member countries, either in kind or in cash, through various mechanisms as deemed suitable to support Regional Forum activities,
 - voluntary contributions, either in kind or in cash, to support a dedicated secretariat for the Regional Forum,
 - contributions from international partners and organizations,
 - Other options that member countries may feel suitable to explore.

9) Emerging and Current Global and Regional Strategic Issues and Technical Areas which are Relevant to the Regional Forum:

1. acknowledged the three emerging or current issues presented and shared in the meeting: One Health (OH), Health agenda under COP28 Presidency, and Other Environment and Health issues - Air Pollution; Global Framework on Chemicals; and Plastic Treaty,
2. noted the interventions and recommendations as follows:
 - the need for a multisectoral approach in responding to health and environment challenges. The APRFHE should consider that the scope of this forum is already broad and covers a lot of issues and hence be cautious of creating additional technical subjects for the APRFHE (Brunei Darussalam),
 - OH is one of the most important issues, and there is a need to enhance the capacity of Member Countries (Japan). Through its presidency by Japan, G7 is actively promoting OH and has recently organized a technical meeting on the OH approach. It is important to note that OH encompasses not only AMR but also various crucial environmental issues. The Philippines reported that they started having a discussion and policy development on OH. Thailand reported that the OH approach is interdisciplinary, and such collaboration is essential to address the vulnerabilities related to health and climate change. In this regard, Indonesia proposed to rename TWG on Ecosystem and Health into TWG on OH. In consideration of the capacities and capabilities of Member Countries, it is recommended that capacity-building activities on OH be implemented. To avoid overburdening countries, it is suggested to assist

with a well-structured work plan and initiatives to be submitted by Indonesia,

- Uploading emerging and recent issues on health and environment on the APRFHE website and having similar sessions on emerging issues in the upcoming Ministerial Meeting in 2024.

10) **Thematic Working Groups:**

1. agreed on the following Thematic Working Groups of the Regional Forum and their respective Co-Chairs

Thematic Working Group	Chairs
1. Air quality and Health	Republic of Korea (MOE) and Thailand (MONRE)
2. Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Japan (MOHLW) and Indonesia (MOH)
3. Chemicals, Waste, and Health	Japan (MOE) and Thailand (MOPH)
4. Climate change and Health	Philippines (DENR) and another Country
5. Health Impact Assessment	Thailand (MOPH) and Malaysia (MOH)
6. One Health	Indonesia (MOH) and another country

11) **Recommended the Following with Regards to Future Actions on TWG Work plan:**

1. noted the written work plan sent by the following TWGs: TWG on WASH and TWG on HIA,
2. acknowledged the verbal presentation of the following TWGs: TWG on WASH, TWG on HIA, TWG on Chemicals, Waste, and Health, TWG on Climate Change and Health, and TWG on Air Quality and Health,
3. encouraged that all TWG will revise or develop a written work plan for five years and submit it to the Chair by the first of December 2023,
4. the Secretariat, in close collaboration with the Chair, will share and circulate the written TWG work plan with all member countries for reading, comments, and inputs in advance,
5. the revised work plan will be presented to all member countries for online approval, at the latest by the middle of January,
6. the approved work plan will be posted on the Regional Forum website,
7. noted the TOR of the TWGs. Acknowledged with the principle that the TOR should not be prescriptive, the following recommendations are proposed:
 - the Secretariat, in close collaboration with the Chair, will prepare a revised TOR of the TWG and will then share with all Members for comments and inputs,
 - the revised TOR will be presented to all Member Countries for online approval, at the latest by the middle of January 2024,
 - the approved TOR will be posted on the Regional Forum website.

12) **Selection of Chair and Vice Chair of the Regional Forum:**

- noted the nomination of the Vice Chair and the Next Chair of the Regional Forum by requesting the member countries to review the working documents of the nomination of the Vice Chair and the Next Chair of the Regional Forum,
- noted the 12th HLOM and the 5th Ministerial Meeting by taking a note that the 12th HLOM and the 5th Ministerial Meeting will be held back-to-back tentatively in September/October 2024 and by requesting the member countries to review the working documents of the 12th HLOM and the 5th Ministerial Meeting.

ADOPTION OF REPORT

24. The meeting report will be circulated to Regional Forum members and non-members for input. The report adoption was undertaken by ad-referendum.

CLOSING REMARKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

25. The Meeting noted the closing remarks from H.E. Anas Ma'ruf. He expressed heartfelt appreciation and extended his warmest gratitude to all those who contributed to the successful hosting of the 11th HLOM.

26. The Meeting was held in the spirit of sustainable, mutual, inclusive, dynamic, and beneficial regional cooperation.

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