PMAC PRINCE MAHIDOL AWARD CONFERENCE 2023

PL 2

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES AND HARNESSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTH AT THE BIODIVERSITY-CLIMATE NEXUS

| BACKGROUND

Unabated biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution are the leading global health challenges of our time. Our dysfunctional global food system is at the heart of this “triple planetary crisis” and holistic multisectoral approaches to health, such as One Health and planetary health, are at the heart of solutions to bridge the persistent and growing health challenges they pose. At the same time, ecosystem-based approaches, or nature-based solutions, that embed health co-benefits offer essential opportunities to meet the adaptation and mitigation commitments set out in the Paris Agreement and post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, when combined with food system transformation, technological innovation, a green energy transition and the necessary socio-political and economic conditions to achieve equity and social justice.

| OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of sub-theme 2 will be to take in-depth look at the common drivers of biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution, and the impact of these environmental determinants, coupled with social, political and economic determinants on health outcomes. It will focus both on underlying systemic challenges at this nexus and key opportunities to overcome them in the path toward sustainable transformational change. It will further seek to catalyze health leadership, from local to global levels, by drawing on existing evidence and knowledge through more coordinated, ambitious and inclusive multi-sectoral approaches to inform evidence-based policies and actions. It will also seek to identify key opportunities to maximize health co-benefits and minimize trade-offs at the biodiversity-climate nexus, and to build both social and ecological resilience, and resilient health systems and societies, in the face of global environmental change.

Panelist / Speaker

Maria Neira

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Dr Maria P. Neira is the Director of the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health at the World Health Organization. Prior to that she served as Under-Secretary of Health and President of the Spanish Food Safety Agency.

Dr Neira began her career as a medical coordinator working for Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders). She then spent several years working in different African countries during armed conflicts.

Dr Neira is a Medical Doctor by training, specialized in Endocrinology and Metabolic Diseases in Paris, France, Master of Public Health and a University Diploma in Human Nutrition, Epidemic Preparedness and Crisis Management.

Among many distinctions, she has been awarded the Médaille de “L'Ordre National du Mérite” by the Government of France and received an “Extraordinary Woman” award by HM Queen Letizia of Spain. In early 2019, she was nominated among the top 100 policy influencers in health and climate change.