

PS 3.3

MULTI-SECTORIAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES: MITIGATION

| BACKGROUND

Climate change has complex impacts on people's health that fall into three broad categories: 1) direct impacts such as heat and extreme events; 2) indirect impacts via ecosystems which include impacts on global food supplies and changes in vector-borne disease transmission; and 3) indirect impacts via socio-economic systems exemplified by increased poverty and intensification of existing inequalities and migration. The magnitude of these impacts on health will increase in the future and their severity will depend on the effectiveness of climate mitigation and adaptation actions. All people are exposed to the hazardous effects of climate change, but some groups are particularly vulnerable such as people living in low- and middle-income countries, small island nations and other coastal regions, megacities, and mountainous and polar regions. Other vulnerable groups include children, older adults, and those with underlying health conditions. Many of these groups live in higher rates of extreme poverty with few sources of support to adapt to a degraded, and climate-modified environment, let alone deal with the health consequences of these changes.

Main contributors to global climate change are fossil fuel combustion and industrial processes but also agriculture, deforestation and other land-use changes, transportation, and building energy use. In addition, the health sector is responsible for 4.6% of greenhouse gas emissions, with 70% coming from the health sector supply chain. Addressing this emission source is a critical need to meet carbon neutrality. A variety of co-benefits exist by mitigating emissions from the healthcare sector. Switching to renewable, distributed energy at hospitals and health centers, for example, can reduce GHG emissions, reduce air pollution, and generate money savings. Such a transition increases energy reliability as well, which can help facilities expand health service offerings and refrigerate temperature-sensitive medications.

Evidence suggests that the value of the health benefits of climate change mitigation has the potential to offset most of the initial mitigation costs. Successful policies and practices to address climate change mitigation and health require systematic, well-planned collaboration and decision-making between relevant sectors.

| OBJECTIVES

The objective of this session is to share practical lessons and innovations for multi-sectoral policies and practices to improve understanding of and strengthen multi-sectoral action on climate change mitigation and health across regions, looking at the impacts of climate on health and the healthcare sector on climate. This session will explore the various potential leverage points, financing mechanisms, and collaborations needed to mitigate climate change, promote human health and well-being, and secure environmentally sustainable healthcare practices, looking toward solutions that enhance justice and equity for vulnerable and underrepresented groups.



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DR. WIJARN SIMACHAYA is the current President of Thai Environment Institute (TEI), the Secretary-General of Thailand Business Council for Sustainable Development (TBCSD), a Chairman of Circular Economy Sub-committee under National Agenda BCG Economy Model and a President of Thai Sustainable Consumption and Production Network (Thai SCP Network) . His various responsibilities in the past were natural resources and environmental plans, strategy development, pollution control plans as well as international cooperation on natural resources and environment issues. He was also a representative of the ministry of various UN, Sub-regional, and ASEAN / ASEAN Plus 3 Forums. He had played an important role to develop the ASEAN Haze-Free Road Map by 2020, and Bangkok Declaration on Combating Marine Plastic Debris in ASEAN region, endorsed by ASEAN Summit in June, 2019. He worked as a leader of green growth and government reform strategy development for Thailand. He currently works with various public-private agencies, civil societies and communities on the ground to develop environmental management models for the country, and moving toward sustainable development. Currently, he has also served an environmental expert in various nation committee such as Bio-Circular-Green Economy Model, Coastal and Marine Resources Administration Committee, Circular Economy Sub-Committee, National Water Resources Committee, Chairman of Board of Directors of Thailand Greenhouse Gas Organization, Chairman of Bio-based Economy Development Office (Public Organization) etc.

DR. SIMACHAYA joined the Office of Environmental Policy and Planning Board in 1984. He used to serve as a director of the Environment Division of the Mekong River Commission Secretariat (International Organization) in Lao PDR during 1997-1998. He served as several high ranking positions in the Ministry, including Director-General of the Pollution Control Department for 2 times and the Secretary-General of the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning. His last position with government was the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment until his retirement, 30 September, 2019.

DR. SIMACHAYA holds 2 Bachelor's degrees in Chemical Education and Laws from Chiang Mai and Ramkhamhaeng Universities, respectively, a Master's degree in Environmental Science from Kasetsart University and a Graduated Diploma in Sanitary Engineering from Chulalongkorn University. His highest degree is a Doctorate in Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Environmental Engineering from University of Guelph, Canada in 1990. He also received honorary doctoral degrees in Environmental Science, Environmental Management and Environmental Education from 7 leading universities in Thailand.