



Global Environmental Change and  
**Human Health**



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## The science-policy bridge for a changing climate: water, health, disease

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A Side Event at the Second Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP-2) to the Protocol on Water and Health  
(Bucharest, Romania, 23-25 November 2010)

Organised by the Global Environmental Change and Human Health (GECHH )  
and the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH)

Water (amount, timing, access, cleanliness, and links to illness) is being adversely affected by global environmental change – including climate change. While recognized as an emerging issue within the Protocol on Water and Health, considerations by countries with respect to climate change were highlighted as “rather vague”, as per the Regional Report on the Status of Implementation of the Protocol ([ECE/MP.WH/2010/2–EUDHP/1003944/4.2/1/8](#)). Only few countries addressed the issue of climate change in the context of adaptation strategies ([Romania](#), [Germany](#)), research needs ([Germany](#)) or the emergency handbook ([Finland](#)).

In this context, taking into account the Protocol’s Task Force on Extreme Weather Events’ work on the *Guidance on Water Supply and Sanitation in Extreme Weather Events* as well as the work of the Task Force on Water and Climate of the Water Convention (e.g. [Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change](#)), the side event is intended as a knowledge-sharing opportunity:

- to inform Parties on current policy-relevant research on the impact of climate change on water-related diseases;
- to highlight the key-role of the ecosystem (eco-health) approach to research in addressing the water/health nexus in a changing climate;

and

- to foster bridges between the research and the policy communities.

Outcomes of the GECHH 2010 Symposium, organized in partnership with UNU-INWEH, “*Global Environmental Change and Human Health: Protecting Water Quality*” (Hamilton, Canada, 31 October – 2 November 2010) will also be presented as examples of research/policy bridges on the water/health nexus.

Speakers include: Dr. Luciana SINISI (Chairperson of the Task Force on Extreme Weather Events), Professor Susan ELLIOTT (Dean, Applied Health Sciences, University of Waterloo, Canada; UNU-INWEH Adjunct Professor), Professor Pierre HORWITZ (Member, Scientific and Technical Review Panel of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, tbc), and Dr. Lucilla SPINI (GECHH Project Officer, UNU-INWEH). Open floor discussion on research-policy bridging on the impact of climate change on water-related diseases will follow.

*Reference to MOP-2 Agenda Items 5(c) “Water Supply and sanitation in short-term critical situations and adaptation to climate change”, 7 “Capacity-building and sharing of experience” and 10 “Partners in cooperation: links with other organizations and programmes”.*

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The side event will be conducted in English.

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