



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
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Committee on Environmental and Health crisis : Governance and solidarity challenges
Comité Crise environnementale et sanitaire : enjeux de gouvernance et de solidarité

**Call from NGO members of the Environmental and Health Crisis Committee
of the Council of Europe Conference of INGOs
in the run-up to COP 28
Dubai 30 Novembre - 12 Decembre 2023**

For urgent, local and systemic action

COP28 will take stock of the implementation of the Paris Agreement, halfway through the 2030 Agenda, at a time when global temperatures and greenhouse gas emissions are breaking records. Natural disasters caused by extreme weather events are worsening, combined with the threat of ice cap collapse and melting permafrost, releasing methane and pathogens. They increase the loss of natural resources due to reduced biodiversity, air and water pollution, and slow degradation of soil and subsoil.

Now alarmed by the low commitment of States Parties confirmed **by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Emissions Gap Report** of 20 November 2023, which raises fears of a temperature increase of 2.5 to 2.9°C, well beyond the 1.5°C limit set by the Paris Agreement,

The NGOs that are members of the Environmental and Health Crisis Committee call for urgent local and systemic action based on 4 priorities :

1. Think globally and act locally, in a transversal way, with a strong mobilisation of civil society

Currently, cities account for 80% of the world's wealth. They will be home to nearly 70% of the population by 2050, making urbanisation a historic challenge. They **are now responsible for the consumption of two-thirds of the world's energy, and 70% of annual global emissions**. It is therefore **in the cities and regions that the challenge is being played, and that it must be won**.

The vast majority of local and regional authorities are calling for decisive action to protect people and their living environment. All are ready to play their part in containing the immediate effects of climate change in the short term, and in the medium and long term in favour of responsible development. All agree that they are the protagonists of the actions and policies undertaken and planned at the global level. The role of local government is essential because it is the layer of government closest to the people, who often have significant decision-making and spending power. All must act in conjunction with civil society.

2. Promoting systemic action and synergy between prevention and adaptation

Sustainable Development Goals 11 and 13 recommend accelerating the energy transition and reducing emissions before 2030 through **an approach that "embraces nature, people, lives and livelihoods at the heart of climate action"**.

Our NGOs call for adoption of

- **regional and local risk prevention plans** that develop a **synergy between mitigation and adaptation, in conjunction with the population to strengthen the resilience of territories;**
- **a systematic component of adaptation to the most pessimistic forecasts**, in development and urban plans, prevention plans against natural, industrial and health risks, construction and housing renovation projects, safeguarding agriculture combined with the protection of biodiversity;
- **a permanent focus on climate issues in education and training** to build a citizen climate culture and develop the skills necessary for the climate transition.
- **a portal to pilot measures**, which brings together all the relevant services and operators, to make it the one-stop shop for a public and individual adaptation service;
- **a statistical tool for monitoring sectors such as industry and tourism**, in order to build prospective analyses, an effective adaptation, and safeguarding strategy.

3. Basing the transition on sobriety and the implementation of a circular economy

The economic and financial difficulties of most states call for the production of wealth generated by **limiting energy waste**, but also **by a circular economy that rejects social and environmental dumping and that mobilises the entire population**.

Our NGOs call for

- **greater involvement of fundamental and applied research on sobriety, systematic dissemination and popularisation of the work** and good practices carried out, with the use of qualified professionals to guide the transition in a transversal way;
- **choices and policies, designed with the active participation of users to support an effective circular and social economy**, promoting new forms of employment and development;
- **coordinated and integrated cross-cutting actions at all levels of territorial administration**, bringing together the public and private sectors, policy makers and citizens.

4. Promoting a health-centered paradigm shift

Our NGOs welcome COP28's dedicated day to health and call for adopting

- **coherent legal tools** able of promoting resilience through joint action at all levels of governance, **in all sectors of human and environmental health impacted by climate change**, in accordance with the "One Health" principle,
- **anticipation of the health risk based on the most pessimistic forecasts** for the sick and persons with disabilities, young children and the older persons who suffer more intensely from heat waves, energy poverty and increased air pollution. Its systematic inclusion on the agenda of all the organs of the health ecosystem.
- support for the design **of inclusive cities based on strengthening families to respond to health risks** (cf. Venice Declaration Global Alliance)

Every moment gained is crucial. Concrete actions and agreements are needed at the global level, but they can only be effective at the local level, with the support of civil society, according to the principle of subsidiarity.

This is our call to the negotiators and the Heads of State and Government meeting in Dubai.