



May 2019

Statement to 72nd World Health Assembly on the Draft WHO global strategy on health, environment and climate change.

Agenda item 11.6, document [A72/15](#)

Honorable chairperson, distinguished delegates, colleagues. Thank you for this opportunity to address the Assembly on behalf of the World Obesity Federation and its members.

We congratulate the WHO and Member States on their work to develop the Draft Strategy on health, environment and climate change. In particular, we welcome the emphasis on sustainably improving lives and wellbeing by ensuring healthy environments.

When looking to create health-promoting environments, there are important inter-relationships between climate change and other WHO priorities including obesity and undernutrition – what a recent Lancet Commission on Obesity has termed a ‘global syndemic’. These overarching health challenges are driven by failures in the same systems, including food, transport and urban design. In the face of multiple policy demands and priorities across a variety of health issues, identifying double and triple duty policies in these systems is a cost-effective way to make a real difference to our health, our environment and our planet.

Strong policies require a focus on protecting the public interest and public health. We are concerned by the removal of language from previous versions of the strategy which noted the commitment to tackle undue influence and vested interests going against public interest. It is vital that Member States recognise and address the tactics used by the fossil fuel, automotive and aviation industries which mirror those used by tobacco, alcohol, food and beverage industries to undermine policy which protect public health and we urge for this text to be reinstated.

Finally, we encourage all Member States to provide health sector inputs into processes related to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the urgency of protecting human health through mitigating and adapting to climate breakdown before it is too late must be communicated in forthcoming opportunities such as COP25.

Thank you.