



In Search of Better Health

KENYA MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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PRESS RELEASE

TO: News Editors

Pan-African Conference Issues Landmark Declaration on Environment, Climate Change and Health

Nairobi, Kenya, 24th, October 2025: Delegates attending the Pan-African Conference on Environment, Climate Change, and Health, held in Nairobi, Kenya, have issued a landmark declaration reaffirming Africa's united commitment to safeguard human health, protect the environment, and strengthen climate resilience across the continent.

The four-day conference, convened under the theme "Harnessing Science, Policy, and Partnerships for Environmental Sustainability and Climate-Health Resilience," brought together scientists, policymakers, health professionals, environmental experts, civil society, youth, and development partners from across Africa and beyond.

In the Nairobi Declaration on Health, Environment and Climate Action (HECA), participants recognized that the health of Africa's people is inseparably linked to the health of its environment and ecosystems, and called for bold, evidence-driven, and inclusive action to address the continent's climate and health challenges.

Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, Dr. Deborah Mulongo welcomed the declaration noting, **"this declaration reinforces Kenya's commitment to advancing integrated climate and health governance across Africa. Through collaborative science, policy, and community action, we can transform our adaptation agenda into lasting resilience and sustainable prosperity for all."**

This view was shared by the Chairman of KEMRI Board of Directors, Dr. Abdulahi Ali, **"From Nairobi, we renew Africa's leadership in shaping a healthy, climate-resilient future. The Nairobi Declaration calls on every nation to act decisively, invest in nature, and strengthen partnerships that protect both people and planet."**

"This declaration reaffirms Africa's scientific leadership and our collective resolve to transform evidence into action. From Nairobi, we call upon all nations to accelerate adaptation, strengthen climate-health governance, and champion resilience for generations to come," notes, Acting Director General KEMRI, Prof. Elijah Songok.

“From Nairobi, we send a united message to Africa and the world that we must adapt now, act together, and invest in resilience for our shared future,” the declaration states.

Key highlights of the declaration commits African nations and partners to:

- i. **Accelerate Adaptation and Resilience (“Adapt Now”):** Scale up local and national climate adaptation measures that protect human health, ecosystems, and vulnerable communities.
- ii. **Protect and Restore Ecosystems:** Promote community-led conservation, policy reform, and green infrastructure investment to safeguard Africa’s biodiversity and natural heritage.
- iii. **Integrate Health, Environment, and Climate Governance:** Institutionalize a “One Africa – One Climate – One Health” framework to align policies and actions across sectors.
- iv. **Strengthen Science, Research, and Policy Linkages:** Establish the Pan-African Environment, Climate and Health Action Network (PAECHAN) to advance research, data sharing, and science-to-policy translation. Kenya will host the inaugural PAECHAN Secretariat for the next two years through coordination between KEMRI and NEMA.
- v. **Promote Equity and Inclusive Partnerships:** Mobilize long-term financing, capacity building, and regional cooperation aligned with the AU Agenda 2063, Paris Agreement, and Global Biodiversity Framework.
- vi. **Empower Communities and Youth Leadership:** Strengthen grassroots and youth-led initiatives through the Pan-African Climate Action Baton Journey, symbolizing unity, leadership, and shared responsibility across the continent.

The Declaration further calls upon the WHO/AFRO to advocate for adoption of the declaration among all African Ministers of Health. Africa CDC to fast-track operationalization of the Health, Environment and Climate Action (HECA) platform through AU mechanisms. Development partners to bring the call to action to their respective global and regional caucuses.

In recognition of Kenya’s leadership in hosting the inaugural HECA Conference and championing the climate-health agenda, the Declaration:

Requests H.E. Dr. William Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya and current Chair of the African Heads of State Committee on Climate Change, to champion the establishment of national HECA chapters across AU Member States.

From Nairobi, delegates commit to advancing the Pan-African Living Declaration on Health, Environment, and Climate Action, symbolized by the HECA Baton, a living emblem of continuity, innovation, and collective resilience.

“Together, we move forward under one vision: One Africa – One Environment – One Climate – One Health.”

The declaration was issued by the Organizing Committee, Pan-African Conference on Environment, Climate Change and Health.

The high-level forum brought together scientists, policymakers, research institutions, environmental managers, health professionals, civil society, development partners, and youth from across Africa to deliberate on how to strengthen the science–policy–action nexus for a resilient, healthy, and sustainable continent.

KEMRI, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry, the Africa Research and Impact Network (ARIN), and other continental partners, hosted the four-day conference that comes to end on Friday, 24th, October 2025 with an extensive tree planting exercise in Nairobi.

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About KEMRI:

The Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) is a State Corporation established in Kenya in 1979 through the Science and Technology (Repealed) Act, Cap 250 of the Laws of Kenya operated under the Science Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 as the national body responsible for carrying out research in human health in Kenya. Currently, KEMRI operates under Legal Notice No. 35 of March 2021. KEMRI has grown from its humble beginning over 40 years ago to become a regional leader in human health research. The Institute currently ranks as one of the leading Centres of excellence in health research both in Africa as well as globally.