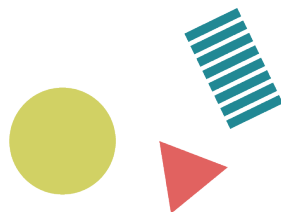




PMAC | PRINCE MAHIDOL
AWARD CONFERENCE **2019**



PARALLEL SESSION 1.5

**WIN-WIN STRATEGY FOR THE CONTROL AND PREVENTION OF NCDS AND
TACKLING ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHALLENGES**



| BACKGROUND

Environmental factors are main causes of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). Growing evidence indicates that early life exposure to environmental risks, such as chemicals, radiation and air pollutants, might increase NCD risk throughout the life course.¹ Air pollution alone causes about 6.5 million deaths a year, or one in eight of all deaths. The strongest causal associations are seen between PM_{2.5} pollution and cardiovascular and pulmonary disease as well as with several highly prevalent non-communicable diseases including diabetes, decreased cognitive function, attention-deficit or hyperactivity disorder and autism in children. Yet, around 2 billion children live in areas that exceed the World Health Organization annual limit of 10 µg/m³. These health burdens related to environmental pollution disproportionately fall on the poor and marginalized communities in low and middle income countries.²

There is a need for increased understanding on the environmental determinants of NCDs, including but not limited to: climate change (e.g. heat waves increasing risks for CVD and stroke), biodiversity loss, environmental pollution (air, water, soil, heavy metals, chemicals); impacts of the urban and built environment on NCDs (e.g. car-centric urban planning, environmental noise, housing, walkability, safe green spaces for physical activity and social interaction); consumption and production patterns across health, nutrition and other sectors. Moreover, the compounding effects of multiple environmental stressors (e.g. multiple contaminants through multiple exposure pathways) are poorly understood.

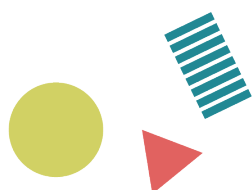
Although there is a growing understanding of the close relationship between health and environment, the linkages are not fully understood and integrated solutions are not effectively considered in policies and interventions across sectors. Moreover, there is a lack of policy recommendations that would enable policy makers to target the interventions across key sectors that would have the greatest beneficial long-term impacts on health, especially of vulnerable populations including children. Improving our understanding of these linkages and how they can be applied to support integrated decision-making can catalyse the public and private sector to act. Whole-of-government and whole-of-society actions are urgently needed for the control and prevention of NCDs and for reversing the alarming trend of environmental degradation and climate change.

¹ Preventing noncommunicable diseases by reducing environmental risk factors. WHO 2017

² The Lancet Commission on pollution and health (2017)

| OBJECTIVES

- To share the latest knowledge on environmental determinants of NCDs
- To share practical experiences and lessons learned on the use of science-based tools for identifying and assessing environmental risks of NCDs
- To share good practices and lessons learned on implementing actions to reduce environmental risks of NCDs
- To discuss multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder strategies, mechanisms and financing needs to tackle environmental determinants of NCDs





Panelist

Montira Pongsiri

Senior Research Associate

Cornell University
United States of America

Montira Pongsiri, PhD, MPH Dr. Montira Pongsiri was the first Science Advisor at the U.S. Mission to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Dr. Pongsiri led the Mission's efforts to develop and apply science and technology to support ASEAN's sustainability goals, and to strengthen the capacity of science-based policy-making through programs such as the ASEAN-U.S. sustainable cities partnership. She was on overseas assignment to the U.S. Mission to ASEAN from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Research and Development where she was an Environmental Health Scientist. At the EPA, Dr. Pongsiri developed and led a research initiative on biodiversity and human health which studied the links between anthropogenic stressors, changes in biodiversity, and infectious disease transmission. She was the agency's lead on technical partnerships with the Smithsonian Institution and with Rockefeller's 100 Resilient Cities Global Challenge. As a member of The Rockefeller Foundation-Lancet Commission on Planetary Health, Dr. Pongsiri brought expertise on environmental change-human disease linkages. Dr. Pongsiri is a Senior Research Associate at Cornell University. Dr. Pongsiri's primary research and science policy interests are in applying scientific understanding of the relationships between the condition of natural systems and human health to inform policy for long-term sustainability impact. Dr. Pongsiri is currently a Visiting Scientist at the UN Environment Asia-Pacific Regional Office in Bangkok where she works on planetary health demonstration studies and integrated methodologies and tools while also helping UN agencies in the region to incorporate environmental change-health issues into their strategic planning and activities. Dr. Pongsiri completed her Ph.D. at Yale University.