



THE COLLABORATIVE ON HEALTH  
AND THE ENVIRONMENT

**FIGO is delighted to participate and work with  
'The Collaborative On Health and The Environment'**

**The International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO)** is a non-profit organization that brings together obstetrical and gynecological associations from 130 countries /territories worldwide. It is dedicated to the improvement of women's health and rights and to the reduction of disparities in healthcare available to women and newborns, as well as to advancing the science and practice of obstetrics and gynecology



**FIGO**

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION  
OF  
GYNECOLOGY & OBSTETRICS

# Environment and Reproductive Health

The mission and vision of the FIGO is to bring about the needed changes for women to enjoy their full sexual and reproductive health and rights

Environmental toxins/ chemicals compromises these rights from women

More so of women who are economically deprived in poor countries (e.g. rich countries dumping even nuclear wastes in poor countries)

Concerned about this slow moving disaster there was a call for action that led to a scientific opinion paper

# The Scientific Opinion Paper

- The FIGO opinion was authored by an international group of physicians and scientists from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American Society for Reproductive Medicine, International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics, Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada, UCSF's Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment, and the World Health Organization.
- These and numerous other reproductive health organizations have either endorsed or formally supported FIGO's opinion.



www.figo.org

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## SPECIAL COMMUNICATION

### International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics opinion on reproductive health impacts of exposure to toxic environmental chemicals☆

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**This seminal paper was published and distributed to 7000 participants at the FIGO Conference. It is available for free download.**

# Exposure to toxic environmental chemicals is linked to millions of deaths and costs billions of dollars every year - FIGO opinion paper

## Examples:

- Seven million people die each year because of exposure to indoor and outdoor air pollution;
- Pesticide poisonings of farmworkers in sub-Saharan Africa is estimated to cost \$66 billion between 2005-2020;
- Health care and other costs from exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals in Europe are estimated to be at a minimum of 157 billion Euros a year; and,
- The cost of childhood diseases related to environmental toxins and pollutants in air, food, water, soil and in homes and neighborhoods was calculated to be \$76.6 billion in 2008 in the United States.

# Environment and Reproductive Health

- “ We are drowning our world in untested and unsafe chemicals and the price we are paying in terms of our reproductive health is of serious concern’
- “Reproductive health professionals witness first hand the increasing numbers of health problems facing their patients, and preventing exposure to toxic chemicals can reduce the burden on women, children and families around the world”

Gian Carlo de Renzo – Secretary General of FIGO

# FIGO's response to the scientific opinion paper

Given accumulating evidence of adverse health impacts related to toxic chemicals, including the potential for inter-generational harm, FIGO has wisely proposed a series of **recommendations**

FIGO proposes physicians, midwives, and other reproductive health professionals advocate for policies to reduce the burden of unsafe chemicals on patients and communities

# Recommendations accepted by the General Assembly of FIGO on 8'th October 2015

1. Advocate for policies to prevent exposure to toxic environmental chemicals.
2. Work to ensure a healthy food system for all.
3. Make environmental health part of health care.
4. Champion environmental justice

These recommendations were proposed by Professor Linda Giduce – Chair of the FIGO working group on environment and health and were unanimously accepted by the FIGO General Assembly



# FIGO's working group on Environmental toxins and Reproductive Health -Chaired by Linda Giudice

## Suggested future actions -

- Explore ways and means of implementing recommendations by working with National Societies
- Scientific sessions organised in National and Regional meetings to increase awareness
- Explore the possibility of working with National Governments, like minded organisations and partners (donors) to make environmental toxins and reproductive health as a Government priority
- Identify country specific issues (e.g. chemical factories discharging chemicals in an irresponsible way) and work with Government and partners to identify solutions
- Sensitise the public and make them aware of the harms and make them own the responsibility to resolve issues
- Innovate – identify new ways of reducing environmental toxins
- Develop an accounting mechanism; monitor the impact made by the introduction of Interventions

25'th -27'th of Sept 2015 the UN General Assembly adopted the “**Agenda 2030: Transforming our World**”, with a consensus of the World Government Community - introduced 17 sustainable development goals SDGs.

Many of the suggested SDG's have Environmental and Reproductive health embedded in their goals



ations Sustainable  
Summit for the adoption of  
development agenda and the  
Development Goals will be  
to 27 September 2015 in New  
vened as a high-level plenary  
e General Assembly.



It is a sheer co-incidence that September 2015 witnessed the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing World Conference on Women under the slogan -“**Planet 50-50 by 2030: Set it up for Gender Equality**”.



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‘**The Agenda 2030; Transforming our world**’ or **Planet 50-50 by 2030**’ i.e. **SDGs** will not materialise without the contribution of 50% of its population i.e. **women** - This can be achieved only with gender equality, equal education and employment opportunities + providing sexual reproductive health and rights.

Reproductive Health and Rights will not be complete unless we improve environmental Health

**FIGO was not and will not be a passive observer to bring about this required change and will act to make these dreams real for women.**