MMI appreciates this opportunity to speak to agenda item (3.5). This statement is supported by PHM.

Climate change threatens the planet and global health. We welcome WHO’s ambition to develop a draft comprehensive global strategy on health, environment and climate change.

WHO has endorsed the SDGs which envision a “world with equitable and universal access to ... health care” and development that ensures “humanity lives in harmony with nature”. Binding global agreements, e.g. on CFCs and tobacco, are effective in protecting the planet and public health. To address climate change and its health effects, similar agreements are necessary and should be incorporated into the draft action plan.

They would bolster WHO’s prioritisation of:

* Health systems strengthening, particularly preparedness for the health effects of extreme weather events, e.g. injuries, cardiovascular stress, and services for climate refugees.
* NCDs and AMR that can be mitigated by regulating and taxing industries promoting unhealthy foods, the use of toxins and antibiotics in agriculture, endocrine disruptors, and air pollutants.
* Decreasing infectious diseases prevalence (e.g. malaria, cholera and zoonotics) which will only increase if global temperatures increase by 2-3°C, as anticipated.

Continued global inaction on climate change undermines efforts by WHO and national governments to improve global health, and places an unacceptable burden on the most vulnerable. Powerful political and economic actors, notably in the energy, transport and agricultural sectors, must assume a larger share of the burden and be held accountable. This requires legally binding global agreements that channel public funds towards initiatives aimed at addressing climate change, and to subsidise public health systems, and research on the health effects of climate change.

Finally, we would like to point out to the impact of unequal global power relations, which are responsible for the relocation of polluting industries from the global North to the South.