



PRESS RELEASE

HEAL welcomes manifesto on breast cancer launched in UK

Brussels, 23 October 2013 – The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) welcomes the recommendations set out in Breast Cancer UK's '*Prevention is better than cure: 5 pledges for 2015 and beyond*' (see press release below).

HEAL is especially concerned about the need to improve the EU regulation of chemicals – which sets the parameters for national laws and policies. A forthcoming new strategy on endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) has been delayed since causing huge disappointment in the environmental health community.

Message from Lisette van Vliet, Senior Policy Advisor, HEAL:

We welcome Breast Cancer UK's challenge to the UK Government 'to stop breast cancer before it starts'.

In May this year, a group of the world's leading scientific experts on endocrine disrupting chemicals made the strongest ever call for swift regulatory action (1). Their Berlaymont Declaration says that "scientific uncertainty should not delay regulatory action and commercial interests must not take precedent over concerns about risks associated with endocrine disruptors".

The scientists noted that breast cancer was rising rapidly in Eastern and Southern European EU countries and that in Western Europe although the increases are slower or levelling off, the rates are much higher than 30 years ago.

We think 'better safe than sorry' should apply across the EU as soon as possible. More and more people are asking: why wait for more evidence before taking action?

Some years ago, HEAL/CHEM Trust published a brochure entitled "Breast Cancer: Preventing the preventable, Exposure to certain man-made chemicals may be contributing to the breast cancer epidemic" (2). Based on a review of evidence prepared by Professor Andreas Kortenkamp, University of Brunel who will be speaking at the event in London today, the report concluded: "Given the known role of oestrogens in breast cancer, it would be prudent to reduce exposures to chemicals that can mimic oestrogen."

Notes to Editors:

(1) HEAL responds to Berlaymont Declaration on endocrine disruptors, 24 May 2013
<http://www.env-health.org/resources/press-releases/article/heal-responds-to-berlaymont>

(2) HEAL/CHEM Trust publication - Breast Cancer: Preventing the preventable, 2012
<http://www.env-health.org/resources/publications/article/breast-cancer-preventing-the>

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The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) is a leading European not-for-profit organisation addressing how the environment affects health in the European Union (EU). With the support of more than 65 member organisations, HEAL brings independent expertise and evidence from the health community to different decision-making processes. Our broad alliance represents health professionals, not-for-profit health insurers, doctors, nurses, cancer and asthma groups, citizens, women's groups, youth groups, environmental NGOs, scientists and public health research institutes. Members include international and Europe-wide organisations, as well as national and local groups. Website: www.env-health.org