



Meeting of Experts on Occupational Safety and Health in Extreme Weather Events and Changing Weather Patterns

Geneva, 20-24 April 2026

► Conclusions¹

1. Having met in Geneva on 20-24 April 2026, the Meeting of Experts on occupational safety and health in extreme weather events and changing weather patterns recalled that such events are increasingly affecting the world of work, posing risks to the safety and health of workers, threatening livelihoods, and compromising business continuity and resilience. In this context, the conclusions adopted by the meeting aim to provide guidance to governments, employers, and workers and their respective organizations on effective occupational safety and health (OSH) policy frameworks and workplace-level measures based on a culture of prevention and the engagement of employers and active participation of workers to prevent and respond to the OSH challenges arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns in the working environment.
2. Extreme weather events are short-term intense weather occurrences at a particular place and time of year, with unusual characteristics in terms of magnitude, location, timing or extent. They may result in immediate injury, death and damage to infrastructure, with safety and health impacts that may extend well beyond the event itself, including long-term and chronic conditions. These events are becoming more frequent in many contexts. Examples of these events or their impact include, but are not limited to, heatwaves, cold waves, heavy precipitation and floods, droughts, wildfires, tropical cyclones and sand and dust storms.
3. Changing weather patterns refer to persistent long-term shifts in temperatures and weather conditions (such as a gradual increase in temperatures, shifts in seasonal cycles and variations in precipitation and, as a consequence, increased risk of UV radiation exposure) and can affect worker safety and health through cumulative and persistent exposure, posing OSH hazards and risks.
4. Extreme weather events and changing weather patterns may also give rise to associated hazards and exposures, including through cascading effects, such as changes in vector distribution, increased agrochemical use, changes in air quality, and an increased risk for major industrial accidents.
5. Taken together, the increased frequency of extreme weather events, changing weather patterns and their associated hazards and exposures can cumulatively or synergistically pose

¹ In accordance with established procedures, the Conclusions will be submitted to the ILO Governing Body for consideration.

diverse risks to the safety and health of all workers, including those in the informal economy. Workers may face both immediate, acute impacts, such as fatal and non-fatal injuries, heat stroke, drowning and physical trauma, as well as long-term and chronic conditions, as well as possible psychosocial impacts and exacerbation of existing conditions. Such risks and their impacts are not evenly distributed across the workforce, and those risks affect certain sectors, enterprises, occupations and groups of vulnerable workers disproportionately.

6. ILO instruments, including those concerning the fundamental principles and rights at work, particularly the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155) and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187) provide an important framework for addressing weather-related impacts on workers and enterprises. Convention No. 155 requires Member States to formulate, implement and periodically review a coherent national policy on OSH and the working environment, and Convention No. 187 promotes the continuous improvement of OSH to prevent occupational injuries, diseases and deaths by the development of a national system. In addition, sectoral and safety and health instruments can also provide guidance.
7. The 2015 *Guidelines concerning a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* further calls for assessments of increased or new OSH risks resulting from weather-related changes and identification of adequate prevention and protection measures to ensure safe and healthy working environments.

I. Concrete measures to strengthen national frameworks to effectively prevent OSH risks associated with extreme weather events and changing weather patterns

8. Governments have the duty to adopt, implement and effectively enforce national laws and regulations to ensure that fundamental principles and rights at work, as set out in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998) as amended in 2022, and ratified international labour standards are applied to all workers, taking into account their obligations under the ILO Constitution.
9. Recognizing that Member States have adopted diverse legislative and institutional approaches to protect workers from weather related risks reflecting their national circumstances and priorities, and taking into account their respective levels of development and available resources, Governments, in consultation with the most representative employers' and workers' organizations, should:
 - (a) ensure that OSH policies and programmes integrate the prevention and management of OSH risks arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns, taking into consideration a gender perspective, including through appropriate preparedness, response and recovery measures;
 - (b) where appropriate, formulate, revise laws, regulations and policies to prevent and address the effects of extreme weather events and changing weather patterns on the safety and health of workers;
 - (c) establish and implement targeted strategies and programmes for sectors, occupations and groups of workers at increased risk of harm due to exposure to hazards arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns;
 - (d) ensure that OSH protections apply to all workers;

- (e) promote effective tripartite and bipartite social dialogue mechanisms at all appropriate levels to address OSH risks arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns, including, as appropriate, through tripartite committees, advisory bodies, collective bargaining mechanisms, and joint workers' and employers' OSH committees or similar structures at the level of the undertaking;
- (f) establish, periodically review and update, in accordance with national conditions and practice, relevant evidence-based thresholds, including, if applicable, occupational exposure limits related to extreme weather events and changing weather patterns, taking into account whether work is performed indoors or outdoors, itinerant and mobile work settings and the intensity of work where relevant, and other factors influencing exposure;
- (g) ensure, in law and practice, that workers who have removed themselves from a work situation, or being directed to cease work, arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns which they have reasonable justification to believe presents an imminent and serious danger to their life or health are protected from undue consequences, including no loss of income, in accordance with national conditions and practice;
- (h) establish or strengthen occupational health surveillance systems, taking into account ILO standards, to conduct periodic surveillance of workers' health and assess the working environment, in relation to extreme weather events and changing weather patterns;
- (i) establish, implement and periodically review requirements and procedures for the recording and notification of occupational injuries and diseases and, as appropriate, dangerous occurrences, commuting accidents and suspected cases of occupational diseases associated with exposure to extreme weather events and changing weather patterns;
- (j) ensure that, in accordance with national law and practice, any disease, injury, incapacity or death due to occupational exposure to hazards arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns give rise to an entitlement to employment injury benefits or compensation;
- (k) strengthen, in collaboration with social partners, inter-institutional coordination mechanisms among relevant competent authorities, including labour, public health, meteorological, environmental, infrastructures and disaster management bodies, to promote integrated approaches to OSH in the context of extreme weather events and changing weather patterns;
- (l) ensure that OSH considerations are integrated in policies and plans for prevention, preparedness, response and recovery related to extreme weather events and changing weather patterns, and in multi-hazard early warning systems, as well as resilient public infrastructures;
- (m) ensure multi-hazard early warning system alerts and guidance related to extreme weather events are effectively communicated to employers, workers and their representatives, including, where appropriate, through technological innovation tools in specific workplaces or sectors, in an accessible language and form;
- (n) promote awareness raising and provide information, technical guidance, training and capacity building on OSH risks and response measures related to extreme weather events

- and changing weather patterns to employers, workers and their respective representatives, labour inspectorates, and OSH professionals;
- (o) strengthen national labour inspection systems, in line with relevant ILO instruments, including through the allocation of adequate resources and the training of labour inspectors, and, as appropriate, other officials, to effectively enforce applicable legislation and provide technical information and guidance to employers, workers and their respective representatives, including through inspection protocols related to extreme weather events and changing weather patterns;
 - (p) provide, in accordance with national circumstances, universal access to adequate, comprehensive and sustainable social protection systems to protect all workers and also enterprises from adverse OSH impacts of extreme weather events and changing weather patterns including income security and health care;
 - (q) encourage the development and implementation of enterprise business contingency and continuity plans that address risks and consequences arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns, and enhance the resilience of businesses, in particular MSMEs;
 - (r) as appropriate, invest in effective, safe and resilient public utility infrastructure as well as in staffing levels, training and equipment for frontline workers and public emergency and health services to ensure appropriate preparedness, response and resilience;
 - (s) actively promote freedom of association and inclusive and effective social dialogue, including collective bargaining and tripartite cooperation, at all levels to forge social consensus on the context of extreme weather events and changing weather patterns.

II. Workplace level management of risks arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns

- 10.** Consistent with national law and practice, and as far as reasonably practicable, employers should ensure that working environments under their control are safe and without risk to health due to exposure to hazards arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns. In particular, they should:
 - (a) conduct gender-responsive documented risk assessments, identify hazards and assess risks to safety and health related to extreme weather events and changing weather patterns and determine preventive and control measures. Risk assessments should also be performed to ensure a safe return to work following an extreme weather event, supported by guidance of the competent authorities;
 - (b) implement practical and evidence-based preventive and protective measures based on the risk assessment and taking into account the characteristics and nature of the hazards, and applying the hierarchy of controls, which can include, but are not limited to:
 - (i) weather adaptive installations, machinery, vehicles and infrastructure, ventilation, air cooling or heating systems, wholesome water, suitable welfare facilities, cooled or shaded rest and working areas;
 - (ii) adjustment of operations and work tasks, task redesign, work-rest cycles or adapted work schedules;
 - (iii) acclimatization, hydration and sanitation strategies; and

- (iv) safe, suitable, gender-responsive personal protective equipment and material provided at no cost to the workers;
 - (c) implement targeted measures for groups of workers at increased risk of harm due to exposure to hazards arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns, including workers who continue working during extreme weather events;
 - (d) adopt operational decisions based on early warning system alerts issued by competent authorities and ensure that relevant information reaches workers and their representatives in a timely manner;
 - (e) establish, periodically review and maintain emergency preparedness, response and recovery plans and procedures for extreme weather events;
 - (f) monitor the working environment, using, where appropriate, relevant meteorological parameters, air quality indicators, and appropriate thermal stress indices, with reference to best practice Occupational Exposure Limits, if applicable, in order to assess workers' exposure to risks arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns, and to inform the implementation of preventive and protective measures;
 - (g) apply occupational evidence-based relevant thresholds, and, if applicable, Occupational Exposure Limits, and apply additional safeguards and controls, guidance, recommendations and other policies established or recognized by the competent authority in relation to extreme weather events and changing weather patterns;
 - (h) ensure workers' health surveillance, with particular attention to workers at increased risk of harm due to exposure to hazards arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns;
 - (i) record and notify occupational accidents, injuries and diseases, and, as appropriate, dangerous occurrences, commuting accidents and suspected cases of occupational diseases in the context of exposure to extreme weather events and changing weather patterns, in accordance with requirements and procedures established by the competent authority;
 - (j) provide information, instruction and training to workers and their representatives on OSH risks related to extreme weather events and changing weather patterns, and on applicable preventive and protective measures;
 - (k) ensure arrangements for consultation and for participation of workers and their representatives in all OSH aspects related to their work that could be affected by extreme weather events and changing weather patterns;
 - (l) ensure that whenever two or more employers engage in activities simultaneously in the workplace, clear allocation of duties and responsibilities are established and that they collaborate in applying the OSH requirements, taking into account International Labour Standards.
- 11.** There should be arrangements at the level of the undertaking under which workers should have duties that include:
- (a) comply with prescribed OSH measures addressing extreme weather events and changing weather patterns;
 - (b) participate in prescribed instruction and training programmes provided by the employer or required by the competent authority;

- (c) participate and cooperate in prescribed work-related health surveillance programmes required by the competent authority and/or provided by the employer for the protection of their health;
 - (d) ensure proper handling and use of protective clothing, facilities and equipment;
 - (e) actively contribute to the identification and prevention of risks by reporting unsafe working conditions, accidents or injuries, near-miss incidents and emerging hazards, recognizing that early reporting is essential for preventing occupational accidents and diseases.
12. Occupational safety and health measures should not involve any expenditure or undue consequences for the workers.

III. Recommendations for future action by the Office

13. In order to continue to provide support to its constituents and strengthen its global leadership in the area of OSH and extreme weather events and changing weather patterns, the Office should:
- (a) promote and support the ratification and implementation of relevant Conventions, the implementation of Recommendations, and as applicable, codes of practice and guidelines;
 - (b) assist governments, upon request, in developing and reviewing national OSH policies and programmes, and legislation to incorporate provisions that address the risks arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns;
 - (c) strengthen the capacities of competent authorities, employers and workers' organizations to address OSH risks arising from extreme weather events and changing weather patterns, with capacity building and resilience building and to provide technical support to labour inspectorates;
 - (d) promote awareness raising and advocacy campaigns, as well as continued research and the development of practical tools on the OSH impacts of extreme weather events and changing weather patterns and related response measures;
 - (e) engage with other international organisations and contribute to multistakeholder initiatives on extreme weather events and changing weather patterns to ensure that OSH concerns are adequately reflected, and to support the participation of ILO constituents in these platforms;
 - (f) collect and disseminate good practices to inform possible and future action of the ILO in providing guidance to constituents.