



## NEWSLETTER

*International Federation of Environmental Health*

**December 2020**

### **Briefing from IFEH President, Prof. Susana Paixão**



*Prof. Susana Paixão President IFEH*

Dear Colleagues

I took over as President of the International Federation of Environmental Health last October and it is with great satisfaction that I write for the first and last number of this newsletter for 2020 but in the hope that it will be the first of many.

During my Presidency there are some goals that I would like to achieve by the end of the term and I would like to share with you. Continue to give worldwide visibility to the Environmental Health and attract more members, publicizing their work and involving IFEH in more international working groups with key global partners in particular with official bodies, will be, in my opinion, essential for the global recognition of Environmental Health workforce.

So we are going to work on the pursuit of bringing Latin American countries and strengthen the presence of Middle East countries in the Federation. This will be essential to reinforce the Federation's presence worldwide.

Also the definition of the theme of the World Environmental Health Day and its dissemination, at least until the end of January of the year of the celebration will be a premise for achieving another objective, which is the inclusion of the World Environmental Health Day on the WHO official agenda.

Publish the Federation magazine at least twice a year and the newsletter four times a year, will be a goal that will be easily tangible by having fantastic colleagues who are dedicated, with whom I have already spoken and who are enthusiastic about this challenge.

Reorganize the Faculty Forum, which has already started to take shape in the previous presidency, with the participation of the Faculty Forum responsible in the meetings of the Board of Directors. It will therefore

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be an asset to involve academic members in the Federation's activities in order to start publishing scientifically based reports and guidelines, in the field of Environmental Health, in order to help the workforce on the ground and to be always up to date, the best and latest techniques available and with information on examples from other countries. The organization and dissemination of this type of documentation will bring greater visibility to IFEH.

Very important will be the promotion / maintenance of the presence of representatives of the Federation, in the main global decision-making meetings and events, in the area of Environmental Health (for example WHO; COP; UNDRR, ...)

Finally, the organization of a working group that deals with gender issues in the area of Environmental Health and establish the bridge with the organization worldwide that work on these issues as well as the promotion of a group that will succeed in bringing together environmental health students at the worldwide level, will be objectives that will allow a more inclusive Federation.

Will be a challenge, because most of them are difficult goals to achieve, but with the collaboration of everyone, I am sure they are tangible.

In the last year we managed to verify what we already know about the importance and strength of Environmental Health. The SARS Cov2 Pandemic has come to demonstrate the vital role of the Environmental Health workforce worldwide to face this challenging time for all of humanity.

It is colleagues who, by tracking contacts, inspecting establishments (teaching, commerce, industrial, etc.) in the implementation of preventive measures to combat COVID 19 and enforcing government guidelines, are preponderant in overcoming this Pandemic. I hope that we will be able to take advantage of this window of opportunity to raise awareness of Environmental Health, which, working at the level of the Health / Environment binomial, working within the scope of Health promotion and disease prevention, are key to the adversity we are experiencing as well as those ahead, namely climate change.

I end by wishing you all, as well as your families, the best in health, happy holidays and that next year will bring us hope and that it will be better than this strange year of 2020. A special greeting to all colleagues who was involved in working under Covid-19 conditions, you are the HEROES of this year.

I hope to continue to count on everyone in 2021 and that we can meet again, preferably face to face in May 2021 in Tartu, Estonia at the IFEH 4th World Academic Conference on Environmental Health.

Keep well and safe.

Regards,  
Susana Paixão, President IFEH

## Looking back on two years in office

Dr Selva Mudaly  
Past President IFEH,  
The South African Institute of  
Environmental



It gives me great pleasure to present my report as President of the International Federation of Environmental Health ( IFEH ) from 20th March 2018 to 24th October 2020.

My Presidency was a critical period in the history of the IFEH. From the first day of my term, I was given the enormous task of developing a Strategic Plan for the IFEH.

At the Council meeting of the 18th March 2018 in Auckland, many member organizations raised issues about the management of the IFEH and the clear direction it needs to take to make it a true representative of all our National Organization, i.e. a real visible and recognized International body representing Environmental Health and all our members as equal partners in the decision making of the organization.

The road in getting the finalization of the Strategic Plan for the IFEH was not an easy one. Task teams were established with our member organizations participated in these task teams.

Each of these Task teams submitted their reports with recommendations. These reports and recommendations together with the scoping strategy points laid the basis to create a new three year Strategic Plan.

Regular reports were submitted to each Board of Directors meetings and the Council meeting, so as to keep the members updated. The Strategic Plan was finally adopted on the 24th October 2020 at the Council Meeting. Going forward all Board of Directors Meetings must include an item addressing the Strategic Plan.

During the process certain urgent actions had to take place to ensure that good governance and management of the IFEH can take place so that the IFEH can function properly with transparency and Democracy, thus transforming the Organization.

A summary of some of these achievements are as follows:

- *A new logo for the IFEH was developed and approved*
- *The IFEH now has a set of Branding rules*
- *A new Mission and Vision statement of the IFEH has been adopted.*
- *We now have a set of Values, a new set of Objectives, defined who we are and who our audience and stakeholders are.*
- *We have successfully launched and used the virtual Zoom platform in conducting our meetings*



- An audit was carried out to determine our membership and the updated office-bearers and the number of members they represent.
- The BOD has co-opted the Chairperson of the Faculty Forum onto the BOD, so as to strengthen the relationship between the Board and the Faculty Forum.
- On the 30th November 2019, the Council rationalized the membership and removed Individual membership from the Procedure Manual.
- The Council on the 21st March 2020 amended the Procedure Manual to ensure that the positions of the Honorary Treasurer and Secretary can only be elected from delegates to the Council and their term of office is 2 years. The cost of travel to Conferences and Congresses will not automatically be paid by the IFEH, but the IFEH can decide to appoint anyone of these office-bearers to represent them.
- Agreed to establish a Finance Committee and the terms of reference for this committee has been adopted.
- One of the most significant achievements for the IFEH during my Presidency was the History of the IFEH was captured in a comprehensive document for future reference of our membership.

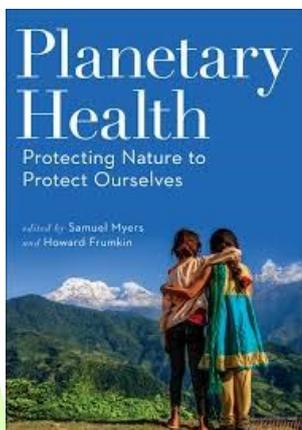
Going forward, the IFEH must continue to represent its National Organizations as a priority at all times and not our own interest. We need to make every single National Organization of the IFEH, equally important and no National Organization is more important than the others.

We must continue to ensure that we continue to transform the IFEH and make it accessible and transparent to all our members.

Lastly, I want to wish the new BOD and the Council all the best going forward and wish all of you and your families a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Dr Selva Mudaly  
Past President – IFEH

## Book Review.



**Planetary Health: Protecting Nature to Protect Ourselves** is a first text book of the new field of planetary health.

This field is focused on the urgent global health challenges associated with humanity's extensive transformation of Earth's natural systems including climate change, biodiversity loss, changes in land use, growing

scarcity of freshwater and arable land, and global pollution of air, water, and soil.

The book starts with an exploration of root causes including rapid growth in the human population and

global consumption patterns. It provides short primers by global experts on each of these areas of global environmental change and then turns to how these environmental changes are impacting nearly every dimension of human health, with chapters focused on food and nutrition, infectious disease, non-communicable diseases, mental health, and displacement and conflict. After exploring the diagnosis, the second half of the book focuses on the rich terrain of solutions with chapters focused on energy systems, urban design, manufacturing, the chemical industry, business and economics. After a chapter on the ethical dimensions of planetary health, Planetary Health closes by presenting an aspirational vision for a bright future: what the world could look like if we get things right.

The book is edited by Samuel Myers, Principal Research Scientist at the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health and Director of the Planetary Health Alliance, and Howard Frumkin, former Dean of the University of Washington School of Public Health.

Info provided by the author [Samuel S Myers](#)

## IFEH World Academic Conference on Environmental Health 2021

Tartu, Estonia, 4 - 8 May 2021



The 4rd IFEH Academic World Conference on Environmental Health will be kindly hosted by: Tartu Health Care College

### Objectives of the Congress

The aim of the 4rd International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH) World Academic Conference on Environmental Health, in Estonia is to bring together various stakeholders from around the world to stimulate multidisciplinary and multisectoral collaboration in environmental health.

### Participants

The conference engage academia, researchers, policy makers, practitioners, students and local communities from all of the world. Through the diverse groups attending the conference, participants are able to deliberate on environmental health interventions.

Updates and more information can be found on the Conference website: <https://www.nooruse.ee/ifeh>



The 16<sup>th</sup> IFEH World Congress on Environmental Health planned for 2020 has been postponed due to the global COVID-19 situation to 2022 and is planned to be held from 23-25 Aug 2022 (tbc) at Kuala Lumpur - Malaysia



“ 16<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH IFEH WORLD CONGRESS 2020 ”  
 The IFEH World Congress on Environmental Health 2020 has been POSTPONED until further notice due to the global COVID-19 situation

Updates will be posted to the IFEH website when available.

## Spotlight on World Environmental Health Day 26 September 2020

This year's theme for World Environmental Health Day was 'Environmental Health, A key public health intervention in disease pandemic prevention' <https://ifeh.org/wehd/2020/WEHD2020.pdf>

This year's theme is embodied in a declaration available on the [website](#).

Key to the implementation of disease preventive measures is the Environmental Health Practitioner (EHP).

EHPs are playing a vital role since the initial response to the outbreak of diseases pandemics all over the world.

There has been great interest from member organizations, regional groups, academic associates and associate members to support and celebrate WEHD with many local initiatives to promote and focus on this year's theme.

The interest has been overwhelming this year, with strong focus on the COVID-19 pandemic

Thanks to all who have helped putting this important subject on the agenda and to put the Environmental Health Practitioner (EHP) work on the agenda in protecting the public from disease pandemics.

Look at the website and see all the impressive initiatives, <https://www.ifeh.org/wehd/>



Video Greetings from the Portuguese Society of Environmental Health



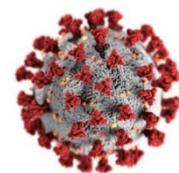
Campaign material by CIEH.



Photo by ZEHPA: Meeting of ZEHPA NEC with National Health Officials.

## IFEH Members Platform for sharing experience and resources on COVID-19 information:

IFEH has developed a special platform on the website for sharing information and resources from member organisations on combating COVID-19 disease and maintaining critical EH functions.



Further information can be found on: <https://ifeh.org/covid19/>



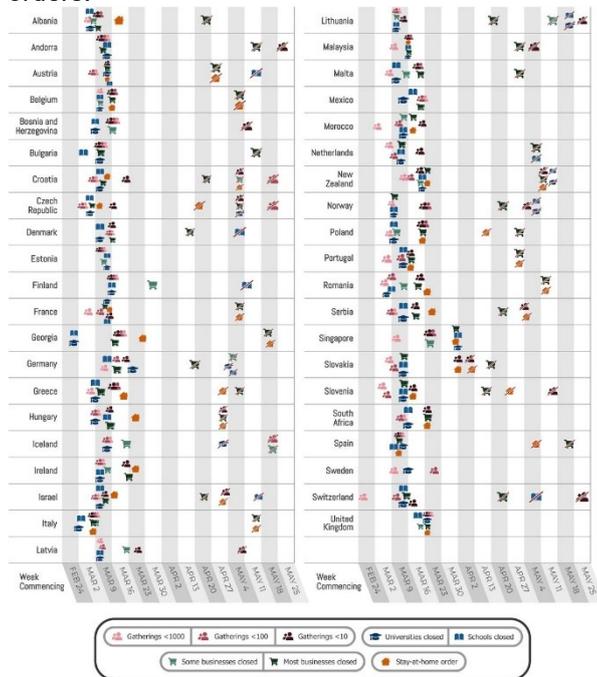
**Research article:**

**Inferring the effectiveness of government interventions against COVID-19**

Abstract from the article on [SciencMag.org](https://www.sciencemag.org):

Governments are attempting to control the COVID-19 pandemic with nonpharmaceutical interventions (NPIs). However, the effectiveness of different NPIs at reducing transmission is poorly understood. We gathered chronological data on the implementation of NPIs for several European, and other, countries between January and the end of May 2020. We estimate the effectiveness of NPIs, ranging from limiting gathering sizes, business closures, and closure of educational institutions to stay-at-home orders. To do so, we used a Bayesian hierarchical model that links NPI implementation dates to national case and death counts and supported the results with extensive empirical validation. Closing all educational institutions, limiting gatherings to 10 people or less, and closing face-to-face businesses each reduced transmission considerably. The additional effect of stay-at-home orders was comparatively small.

The article contains an interesting figure showing different NPI tools used in different countries and at different times. The COVID-19 study shows that the effort was far less coordinated: countries implemented different sets of NPIs, at different times, in different orders.



Source: <https://www.sciencemag.org/>

**IFEH participation in the work on Disaster Risk Reduction – partnership with the UNDRR.**



Photo by H.I. Hansen. United Nations Grand Palais, Geneva

The IFEH is a formal partner with the UNDRR under the Science and Technology Partnership (S&T). In that capacity the UNDRR had invited the IFEH to participate in a survey on the possible themes for the GP2022 for Disaster Risk Reduction scheduled to take place in May 2022, hosted by the Government of Indonesia. Responding to the survey would give the IFEH an opportunity to influence the agenda for the forthcoming GP2022 – as the IFEH has done before. IFEH participated in the latest two UNDRR Global Platforms. GP2017 and GP2019 which took place in Cancun, Mexico respectively Geneva, Switzerland. In order to reply to the UNDRR call the IFEH DRR Committee, chaired by Henning Hansen, EnviNa, held a very productive meeting on Zoom 15 November 2020. At the meeting there was a very fruitful and constructive discussion what should be the final IFEH answer to the UNDRR survey for the topics for the GP2022.

Educational programs on DRR and EH Disaster Management is vital. At the meeting it was decided to seek to get an overview of which courses and educational programs on DRR and Disaster Management are provided by IFEH members including associated universities as well as universities covered by the IFEH Faculty Forum. And as a result, get this overview displayed on the IFEH website [www.ifeh.org/drr](http://www.ifeh.org/drr) in due time. On the wish of the IFEH DRR Committee the chair of Faculty Forum, Andrew Mathieson, who, is already conducting a survey on EH courses, has been asked and he has accepted to include courses and educational programs on DRR and EH Disaster Management in his survey as well.

Further information can be found on:

<https://www.ifeh.org/drr/>



## GENERAL INFORMATION TO MEMBERS

The Federation works to disseminate knowledge concerning environmental health and promote co-operation between countries and member organisations.

### Sharing of information between members

#### IFEH Special Interest Groups – IFEH SIG's

The IFEH website offers several options for knowledge sharing – one of the opportunities is to take part in the IFEH special interest groups. The groups covering 16 different professional fields – drinking water, food safety and security, waste, public health etc. Look at the website for more information <https://www.ifeh.org/sig/>

#### Professional networking

Another way to share information is through the IFEH Facebook group ([facebook.com/ifeh.org](https://www.facebook.com/ifeh.org)) or [LinkedIn IFEH Group](#).

#### Twining arrangements

Exchange between members of IFEH

There is an agreement between the national associations within the IFEH, opening the possibility for members of the national associations to swap office and chair for a period of up to two or three weeks.

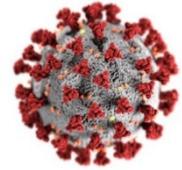
It is highly recommended by the IFEH Council, that members of a National Association within the International Federation of Environmental Health (IFEH) take the chance to see how the environmentalhealth work is carried out somewhere else in the World.

Look at the website for more information

<https://www.ifeh.org/twining/>

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#### IFEH Magazine/Journal and Newsletter

Environment and Health International is the journal of the International Federation of Environmental Health. The magazine is published occasionally.

The magazines are available on the [IFEH website](#). (<https://ifeh.org/publications.html>)

Members are invited to submit short articles or executive summary from longer articles that can be published in the Magazine.

The regular IFEH Newsletters are a source of information on the daily goings-on at the Federation. The latest newsletter is always available as a downloadable file at [IFEH.org](https://www.ifeh.org).

Also small news items are welcome for the newsletter.

Articles for coming issues of the magazine please send to Kathryn Young E-mail: [kathy.young@dit.ie](mailto:kathy.young@dit.ie)

Small news items for the newsletter please send to Jesper Ø. Christensen - [pro@ifeh.org](mailto:pro@ifeh.org).