

**AGENDA**

**4<sup>th</sup> SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM**

**EMERGING CLIMATIC**

**&**

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH RISKS**



Jan 16<sup>th</sup> The Academy of Athens

Jan 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> Hellenic Mediterranean University

*Hybrid event*

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## Welcome message

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**Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,**

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to the *4th Scientific Symposium on Emerging Climatic and Environmental Health Risks*, hosted by the Hellenic Mediterranean University in partnership with the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

This year's symposium brings together distinguished researchers, public health professionals, and policy stakeholders from around the world to address some of the most pressing environmental and epidemiological challenges of our time. The scientific programme features cutting-edge presentations and invited lectures that highlight innovative methodologies, emerging data, and evolving trends in environmental health research across diverse geographical and socio-environmental contexts.

We are especially honoured to introduce our esteemed keynote speakers:

- **Dr. Petros Koutrakis**, Professor of Environmental Sciences and Environmental Health, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health — *“Nuclear Power Plants, Radiation, and Health”*.
- **Dr. Kiyoung Lee**, Professor of Environmental Health Sciences, Seoul National University, South Korea — *“Indoor Air Mitigation Strategies in East Asia”*.
- **Dr. Ali Al-Hemoud**, Researcher in Environmental and Occupational Health and Safety, Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research — *“Dust Storms Mitigation Strategies in Iraq & Kuwait”*.
- **Dr. Barrak Alahmad**, Senior Research Scientist in Occupational Health and Climate Change, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health — *“Heat and the Future of Outdoor Work”*.

We warmly thank each of you for your participation and engagement. Your presence enriches this symposium and strengthens our shared commitment to advancing scientific knowledge, informing policy, and promoting public health at the international level.

We wish you a stimulating and productive scientific meeting.

**Welcome, and thank you for being with us.**

**Prof. Evridiki Patelarou** (Hellenic Mediterranean University- HMU) – School of Health Sciences  
**Prof. Petros Koutrakis** (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health - HSPH) - Program  
Director of Cyprus Harvard Endowment Program

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## Invited Talk

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**Title:** Nuclear Power Plants, Radiation, and Health

**Presenter: Prof. Petros Koutrakis**

**Professor of Environmental Sciences**

**Environmental Health, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health**

Dr. Petros Koutrakis Professor of Environmental Sciences in the Environmental Health Department at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. He has over 35 years of experience in environmental health sciences. His interests include human exposure assessment, ambient and indoor air pollution, environmental analytical chemistry, remote sensing, and environmental radioactivity. His research career has focused on studying exposure methods, developing sampling techniques for gaseous and particulate air pollutants, and studying the effects of air pollution on human health. His research group has conducted a large number of ambient and indoor air quality studies in the U.S. and abroad. He received the Excellence in Exposure Science Award from the International Society of Exposure Science (2018). He has been the director of the Environmental Chemistry Laboratory for over 30 years; his research group has developed state-of-the-art analytical techniques; statistical methods to use satellite data to estimate pollutant exposures where direct measurements are not available, and; extensive experience in evaluating indoor air particle reduction through air filtration. He is a co-author of over 580 peer-reviewed publications, and he was the primary doctoral thesis advisor for 27 students, and more than 15 post-doctoral fellows.

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## Invited Talk

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**Title:** Indoor Air Mitigation Strategies in East Asia

**Presenter:** Prof. Kiyoun Lee

**Professor, Department of Environmental Health Sciences Graduate  
School of Public Health, Seoul National University, Korea**

Dr. Kiyoun Lee received his ScD in Environmental Science and Engineering from Harvard University. He holds BS and MPH degrees from Seoul National University and an MS in Industrial Hygiene from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Prior to his current position at Seoul National University, he served on the faculty of the University of Kentucky, the University of California, Davis, and the Queensland University of Technology in Australia. He served as Dean of the Graduate School of Public Health at Seoul National University and as a member of the Board of Directors of the International Society of Exposure Science. He is also a Fellow of the ISIAQ Academy. Dr. Lee has published more than 172 peer-reviewed international journal articles and 89 peer-reviewed domestic articles. He is currently the Principal Investigator of *Clean Air for Sustainable ASEAN (CASA)*, an international project that provides comprehensive support for ambient air pollution management across the 10 ASEAN member countries.

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## Invited Talk

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**Title:** Dust storms mitigation strategies in Iraq & Kuwait

**Presenter: Dr. Ali Al-Hemoud**

**Research Scientist, Environment and Climate Change Program,  
Environment & Life Sciences Research Center, Kuwait Institute for  
Scientific Research, Kuwait**

Dr. Ali Al-Hemoud is a research scientist at the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR). He is currently the Project Leader and principal investigator in two mega projects: (1) "Development of an Air Quality Management System to Support Decision Making in Kuwait" funded by Kuwait Environment Public Authority (KEPA) with the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and others (Funding amount is US \$10 million), (2) "Improved Resilience to Transboundary Sand and Dust Storms between the Republic of Iraq and the State of Kuwait" funded by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) and in cooperation with UN-Habitat (Funding amount is US \$14 million). He is also a Member of the Technical Advisory Group of the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Air Pollution and Health since 2021, where he worked closely with the WHO and published four Health Science and Policy Summaries (SPS). He has published over 100 manuscripts in international referred journals and has nine book chapters. He has supervised seven PhD and Masters Students in the USA, UK, South Africa, and Bahrain.

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**Invited Talk**

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**Title:** Heat and the Future of Outdoor Work

**Presenter:** Dr. Barrak Alahmad

**Senior Research Scientist, Director of Occupational Health & Climate Change at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health**

Barrak Alahmad is a Physician Scientist at the Department of Environmental Health at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Kuwait's Ministry of Health. He holds a medical degree from the University of Liverpool, United Kingdom, a master's in public health from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and a doctorate in population health sciences from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Alahmad studies climate change and health in the Middle East, specifically the adverse impacts of extreme temperatures on vulnerable populations like migrant workers in Kuwait. His work has been highlighted by professional health organizations, including the World Health Organization and the American Heart Association, and media outlets, including the BBC, CNN, New York Times, The Guardian, and among others. In 2025, the American Association for Advancement of Science (AAAS) Board-Council honored Alahmad with the AAAS Early Career Award for Public Engagement with Science, recognizing his outstanding contributions to engaging with the general public about the effects of heat on the migrant workforce in Kuwait.

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**FRIDAY, 16 JANUARY 2026**

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**Venue: The Academy of Athens, Athens, Greece**

**Topic: Radiation, Nuclear Power Plants, and Health**

**13:00 – 13:15 Greetings: Dr Antonia Trichopoulou**

**13:15 – 14:15 Invited Talk**

**Session Chair: Dr Paraskevi Fragkou**

*Prof. Petros Koutrakis* - Radiation, Nuclear Power Plants, and Health

**14:15-15:00 Moderators: Prof. Efthimios Zervas**

*Jisoo Kim* – Nuclear Power Plants and Health in South Korea

*Jieun Park* – Oxidative Potential of Particle Radioactivity

*Veronica Wang* – Residential Exposure to Nuclear Power Plants and Neurodevelopmental Disorders among US Medicaid Beneficiaries

**15:00 – 15:30 Coffee break**

**15:30 – 16:30 Moderator: Assist. Prof Lila Diapouli**

*Ernani Choma* – New Evidence on Health Impacts of Particle Radioactivity in the US

*Anton Roche* – Mortality and Morbidity Effects of Short-Lived Radionuclides in Ambient Air Pollution in Kuwait

**16:30-17:00 Discussion and Closure**

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**SUNDAY, 18 JANUARY 2026**

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**12:00** Visit to the Archaeological Site of Knossos, Heraklion, Crete

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**MONDAY, 19 JANUARY 2026**

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**Venue: Auditorium, Hellenic Mediterranean University, School of Health Sciences, Heraklion, Greece**

**12:00 – 12:30** Arrival and registration

**12:30 – 13:00** Welcome addresses

**Topic: Air Pollution and Health Impacts**

**13:00 – 14:00** Invited Talks

**Session Chairs: Prof. Panayiotis Yiallourous, Assoc. Prof. Athina Patelarou**

Keynote 1: *Kiyoung Lee* – Indoor Air & Mitigation Strategies in East Asia

Keynote 2: *Ali Al-Hemoud* – Dust Storms & Mitigation Strategies in Iraq & Kuwait

**14:00-15:00** Lunch break/ Coffee break

**15:00 – 16:00 Moderator: Prof. Eric Garshick, Dr. Panayiotis Kouis**

*Diana Yi* – Health effects of short-term exposure to Black Carbon from fossil fuel combustion and biomass burning on cause-specific mortality in Athens, Greece

*Sitara Sastry* – The combined effect of temperature and air pollution, including dust storms, on hospital admissions due to respiratory causes in Greece and Cyprus

*Oyumergen Amarbayar* – Effect of Dust on Hospital Admissions for Respiratory Diseases During Major Dust Events in Crete (2015 - 2024)

*Yinying Qian* – Respiratory health among children with asthma during the desert dust season: findings from the LIFE-MEDEA study in Cyprus and Crete.

**16:00-16:15** Coffee break

**16:15 – 17:00 Moderator: Dr. Carolina Zilli, Assoc. Prof. Michael Zografakis-Sfakianakis**

*Kirstin Miller* – Combined effect of heat and particulate pollution on birthweight in Cyprus

*Jaylyn Sensie* – Social factors at individual and community level that influence health behaviours amongst young adults in Cyprus: The PrePARE for LIFE study

*Gene Pozas* – Association of built environment characteristics and arterial/overall health in the city of Limassol: A spatial study



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**TUESDAY, 20 JANUARY 2026**

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**Venue: Auditorium, Hellenic Mediterranean University, School of Health Sciences, Heraklion, Greece**

**11:00 University Campus tour**

**12:30 – 13:00 Invited Talk**

**Session Chair: Prof. Maria Kanakidou, Prof. Petros Koutrakis**

**Keynote: Barrak Alahmad – Heat and the Future of Outdoor Work**

**13:00 – 13:45 Moderators: Dr. Veronica Wang, Assist. Prof. Alexandros Argyriadis**

*Chathrini Kularatne* – Short-term Associations Between Temperature, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and Mental Health and Self-Harm Admissions in Crete, Greece: A Case-Crossover Analysis

*Adinda Taufik* – Temperatures and mental health outcomes in Kuwait

*Esther Sun* – Association between temperatures and aggressive behavior among mental health in-patients in Cyprus

**13:45 -14:45 Lunch break/ Coffee break**

**14:45 – 15:30 Moderators: Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Giakoumidakis, Assist. Professor Ourania Kolokotroni**

*Mia Sanchez* – Association of weather parameters, area level factors and building characteristics with thermal discomfort in primary school classrooms in Cyprus

*Weijia Zhang* – Evaluating nature based solutions in schools in Nicosia: Spatial Analysis Using the i-Tree Tool

*Yoon Sik Jung* – Effect of environmental stressors on volume overload and clinical outcomes in End Stage Kidney Disease in Cyprus

**15:30 -16:00 Closing statements-** Prof. Petros Koutrakis and Prof. Evridiki Patelarou

## **Zoom Links**

- For those who will be connected virtually the zoom link for the 16<sup>th</sup> of January will be the following:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88554704243?pwd=i6Fku8evtzgL3DgSXVtcTbjaipB44a.1>

Meeting ID: 885 5470 4243

Passcode: 312651

- For those who will be connected virtually the zoom link for the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of January will be the following:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82334073949?pwd=5DRCOFPjRzwzYbG2ZsUoNI9pBIImFEW.1>

Meeting ID: 823 3407 3949

Passcode: 540296

**We are looking forward to welcoming you to  
Athens- Crete, Greece.**