

POISONING OUR PLANET

#TobaccoExposed

Throughout its lifecycle, tobacco pollutes the planet & damages the health of all people.



Dear _____,

Tobacco pollutes the planet and damages people's health in many ways:

- Tobacco growers use chemicals that lead to soil degradation, which contributes to food insecurity.
- Tobacco farming increases deforestation globally, as millions of trees are cut down every year to make space for growing and curing tobacco.
- Tobacco manufacturing worldwide produces approximately 2.26 million metric tonnes of solid waste and 209 000 metric tonnes of chemical waste every year.
- Tobacco smoke worsens air pollution and contains three greenhouse gases: carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxides. Toxic emissions include up to 6000 metric tonnes of formaldehyde and up to 47 000 metric tonnes of nicotine per year globally.
- Cigarette butts are the most common type of litter in the world by count, with some 4.5 trillion cigarette butts discarded into the environment every year. Cigarette filters break down into microplastics that pollute soil and water.
- In the Western Pacific Region, an estimated 1.2 million metric tonnes of tobacco product waste (butts and plastics) are discarded annually. To collect and dispose of this waste properly would cost an estimated US\$ 171 million per year – or the same amount of money it would cost to vaccinate nearly 141 million of the Region's children against measles, mumps and rubella.

We need you and other leaders like you to take action on strong tobacco control measures to protect the environment and save lives.

I am asking you, please:

- To support efforts to strengthen implementation of measures included in the [WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control](#) to reduce tobacco demand and supply. These include: expanding smoke-free public places; prohibiting tobacco advertisement, promotion and sponsorship; using plain and standardized packaging; and increasing tobacco taxes. You can help improve supply and value chains for alternatives to tobacco and invest in programmes to retrain tobacco farmers.
- To help hold the tobacco industry accountable for the cost of cleaning up tobacco product waste.
- To support efforts to stop the tobacco industry from “greenwashing” its reputation and products by marketing itself as “environmentally friendly”.

Please visit the [WHO Western Pacific Region's World No Tobacco Day 2022 event page](#) for more information.

Respectfully,