

To
Sh. Arvind Kejriwal,
Chief Minister 3rd Floor,
A-Wing, Delhi Secretariat,
NEW DELHI-110001.

Subject - Request to publish the Heatwave Action Plan for Delhi

Respected sir,

Greenpeace India and Heatwave Action Coalition India are writing to you with a serious health concern for Delhiites. Delhi is inching towards a scorching summer, after having witnessed the hottest [February](#) in decades and the [warmest day](#) of the year so far. Many agencies and studies, including the Indian Meteorological Department, have [predicted](#) that the temperatures in upcoming months will be higher than normal with a high probability of heat waves occurring over many regions of central and adjoining northwest India in this period. Further, the Ministry of Health recently [warned](#) the heatwaves to be a cause of great concern and debilitating illnesses. With the current weather patterns testifying for this, it is no doubt that the situation in Delhi is nothing short of a climate emergency.

In this pressing context, it is important that the Delhi government lives by its duties and releases the Delhi Heat Action Plan. Despite the issue of [National Guidelines](#) for Preparation of Action Plan for Prevention and Management of Heat Waves in 2016 and the [advisal](#) to states to prepare and implement Heat Action Plans (HAPs) at all levels, the national capital and one of the most vulnerable locations, Delhi, has not received one yet. HAPs are important because they propose a variety of preparatory activities, post-heatwave response measures, and disaster responses that help in adaptation to and mitigation of the effects of the extreme weather across state, district and city government departments to decrease the impact of heat waves. Although there are illustrative examples of the marked positive effects of the timely implementation of HAPs in several regions across India, the Delhi government's silence around Delhi's HAP is deafening.

Of the over 18 million [population](#) of Delhi, [11 million](#) population lives in the 'informal city'. The city attracts migrants from the most vulnerable regions of India, who are mostly employed as outdoor or construction workers. Many migrants arrive from climate-sensitive areas and are escaping floods and droughts in their home regions. But, on entering the national capital, they are forced to face new risks and climate change related challenges such as the heatwaves. Further, the other groups vulnerable to heatwaves are people over [65 years of age](#) and [newborns](#).

In the 2022 heatwaves, more than [half of Delhi's population](#) were thrown into devastating socio-economic and public health impacts. With [predictions](#) of the El Nino and its impacts starting from mid-2023, the nation is brazing itself for an even extreme summer. The Delhi government too, therefore, must waste no further time mulling over the plan, but release and implement the HAP as soon as possible and avoid significant human and economic casualties. We, Greenpeace India and HAC recommend 10 pointer actionables for the heatwave:

1. Delhi Heatwave Action Plan should be released before May 7th 2023 and the draft should be published for public consultation before 30th of April
2. HAP should involve scientific climate projections based on hyperlocal data from across Delhi.
3. HAP adaptation and mitigation measures should not be one-size-fits-all, but specialized to different vulnerable groups based on their exposure.
4. The dissemination of information from the early warning system that can forecast heatwaves and provide timely alerts to the public.
5. Identify the most vulnerable population like outdoor workers, women, children, disabled and specially abled-persons and senior citizens and provide special support to them. This should include encouraging flexible working hours that allow for early morning or evening work hours to avoid the hottest and most-at risk hours of the day.
6. There should be sufficient policy integration for all HAPs vertically (Federal levels like state, city, local body etc) and horizontally (across departments like labour, health, agriculture etc)
7. There should be a central fund for the implementation of HAPs among other adaptive measures
8. HAPs should be made legally binding through legislative action.
9. HAPs must include a focus on providing urgent healthcare for persons affected by heat stroke - special heatwave wards in public hospitals dedicated to help citizens, including kits available in Primary Health Centres (PHC).
10. HAPs should take into account nature-based-cooling systems - accessible green cover spaces as well as temporary cooling systems for citizens which are critical for seeking relief in case of a severe heatwave.

About Heatwave Action Coalition India (HAC)

H.A.C is a coalition of intersectional youth climate groups in India demanding comprehensive action on heat waves from local, state and national governments to help citizens prepare and mitigate this inter-connected climate & health crisis

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