

CONSUMERS SHUT OUT AS COP11 PURSUES FAILED PROHIBITION AGENDA

Geneva, November 18, 2025 – The World Vapers' Alliance expresses serious concern as COP11 starts to make decisions that will shape the lives of millions of consumers, yet systematically excludes the people most affected from the conversation.

Michael Landl, Director of the World Vapers' Alliance, said:

“Delegates at COP11 are trapped in an echo chamber that rejects science and leaves smokers behind. Dismissing harm reduction as an industry ploy ignores the evidence that it works. Vaping and nicotine pouches are not the problem, they are part of the answer. Yet consumers, the people these policies actually affect, are locked out of the room where decisions get made.”

The Conference of the Parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control opens this week amid a troubling pattern of closed-door policymaking, donor influence, and ideological rigidity that prioritises abstinence-only approaches over evidence. While the WHO and aligned organisations claim to champion public health, their strategies increasingly rely on tactics that ignore real-world data and proven solutions.

Two issues stand out as particularly damaging at COP11. First, harm reduction continues to be smeared as an industry ploy rather than recognised as a legitimate public health strategy. Evidence from Sweden, the UK, New Zealand, and Japan demonstrates that accessible, regulated alternatives to cigarettes drive real reductions in smoking rates and smoking-related disease.

Second, COP11 is pursuing aggressive restrictions and bans on those less harmful alternatives, like vaping products and nicotine pouches. These policies do not lead to quitting; they lead smokers back to cigarettes. The push to treat all nicotine products as equivalent to smoking, despite overwhelming evidence showing vaping and nicotine pouches carry a fraction of the risk, is a false equivalence. It undermines public health and sets back years of progress in tobacco control.

The process itself remains broken. Decisions are made behind closed doors, heavily influenced by wealthy donors and predetermined by NGO partners aligned with a single approach. Meanwhile, consumer advocates and smokers themselves remain systematically excluded. Real progress requires listening to evidence and those with lived experience. COP11 must break from business as usual.

Contact:

Michael Landl

Director, World Vapers' Alliance

michael.landl@worldvapersalliance.com

www.worldvapersalliance.com

About the World Vapers' Alliance

The World Vapers' Alliance amplifies the voices of vapers worldwide and advocates for sensible harm reduction policies that help smokers quit and save lives.