

FAST FACTS



On climate and health

1. Climate change is the single biggest health threat facing humanity. The impacts are already harming health through air pollution, disease, extreme weather events, forced displacement, food insecurity and pressures on mental health. Every year, environmental factors take the lives of around 13 million people.
2. Meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement could save about a million lives a year worldwide by 2050 through reductions in air pollution alone. Avoiding the worst climate impacts could help prevent 250,000 additional climate-related deaths per year from 2030 to 2050, mainly from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhoea and heat stress.
3. The value of health gains from reducing carbon emissions would be approximately double the global cost of implementing carbon mitigation measures.
4. Over 90 per cent of people breathe unhealthy levels of air pollution, largely resulting from burning fossil fuels driving climate change. In 2018, air pollution from fossil fuels caused \$2.9 trillion in health and economic costs, about \$8 billion a day.
5. Transportation produces around 20 per cent of global carbon emissions. Alternatives like walking and cycling are not only green but also offer major health benefits, such as reducing the risk of many chronic health conditions and improving mental health.
6. Systems to produce, package and distribute food generate a third of greenhouse gas emissions. More sustainable production would mitigate climate impacts and support more nutritious diets that could prevent close to 11 million premature deaths a year.
7. Health systems are the main line of defence for populations faced with emerging health threats, including from climate change. To protect health and avoid widening health inequities, countries must build climate-resilient health systems.
8. The majority of countries identify health as a priority sector vulnerable to climate change. But a huge finance gap remains. Less than 2 per cent of multilateral climate finance goes to health projects.
9. Healthy societies rely on well-functioning ecosystems to provide clean air, fresh water, medicines and food security. These help to limit disease and stabilize the climate. But biodiversity loss is happening at an unprecedented rate, impacting human health worldwide and increasing the risk of emerging infectious diseases.

