



PARALLEL SESSION 3.1

TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE WHILE MAXIMIZING HEALTH IMPACT



| BACKGROUND

In the last couple of decades, the knowledge and awareness of increasing risks to human health posed by climate change have grown. According to the first Lancet commission on health and climate change (2009), climate change is the largest global health threat in the 21st century. Succeeding findings demonstrated that although human health has improved dramatically between 1950 and 2010, this gain was accompanied by unprecedented environmental degradation that now threatens both human health and life-support systems.

Climate change impacts human health in many direct and indirect ways. The disruption of eco-services has a global impact and influence all populations. It causes frequent and extreme weather events, such as floods, storms, and droughts, entails an increased risk of deaths and injuries, mental health disorders, infectious diseases, and large-scale displacement of people. Increased concentrations of ground-level ozone could aggravate respiratory illnesses and increase cardiopulmonary mortality. There are shifts in the incidence and distribution of some vector-borne diseases like dengue, particularly at the edges of the distributions and growing risk for emerging infections among livestock and humans. Accelerating urbanization also poses health risks related to climate change, including heat island effect and poor air quality. In the majority of the world's big cities, air quality does not meet WHO recommendations. Unplanned, rapid urbanization and the increasing number of motorized vehicles in many low- and middle-income country cities contribute to the negative trend.

There is a growing recognition and evidence that many of the suggested and required actions to meet the Paris Agreement's 2°C climate target (mitigation) would have a positive health impact. This includes efforts in key sectors such as agriculture, energy, transportation, and waste management. However, with prevailing emission trends and overexploitation of natural resources, the agreed temperature targets are not expected to be met, and the last half-century's progress on health in the world is endangered.

In September 2019 two important high-level meetings will co-inside at the UN; the Secretary-General's Climate Summit and the High Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (UHC). There is an opportunity to connect those two agenda through a stronger focus on enabling people to make healthier choices for themselves, their families and for the planet. UHC needs to be seen within the context of megatrends as climate change and environmental threats, shape global health. Pathways for health effects are complex with many factors interacting, and climate change will intersect with different significant trajectories, e.g., in urbanization, equity, aging population, and social behavioural change. Understanding the contribution of both mitigation and adaptation action to sustainable development and improved health outcomes, is critical for designing policies and actions that successfully realize co-benefits and achieving UHC. For example, one third of greenhouse gas emissions and 70% of use of fresh water are linked to our food production. By changing food production and consumption as well as food waste we could not only scientifically contribute to the climate targets but also improve nutrition and avoid 11 million premature deaths each year (appr.20% of total global mortality).

To keep the global average temperature rise well below 2°C and to achieve SDG3 as well as the UHC target there is a need for transformation across all sectors of society, including energy, transport, spatial infrastructure, food and agriculture, and building resilient health systems. These transformations may in turn help tackle the root causes of the world's most significant public health challenges.

| OBJECTIVES

- Present the evidence of and interlinkages between climate change and health/UHC and discuss the specific co-benefits between actions for health and actions for the climate
- Exploring strategies of tackling threats of climate change for improved health and well-being - the roles of government, civil society and business, as well as action that can be taken within the health sector to ensure health facilities are climate-resilient
- Examine experiences for integration of interventions and cross sectorial work e.g. at city and municipal levels



Moderator

Anders Nordstrom

Ambassador of global health

Swedish MFA

Sweden

Dr Anders Nordström is the Swedish Ambassador for Global Health at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Stockholm. Medical doctor from the Karolinska Institute.

He worked for WHO as ADG for General Management, Health Systems and Services and as Acting Director-General and as the Head of the WHO Country Office in Sierra Leone.

He has served as Director-General for the Swedish International Agency for Development Cooperation (Sida). As the Interim Executive Director, he established the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria as a legal entity.

He has served as board member of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, GAVI, UNAIDS and PMNCH.



Keynote Speaker

Maria Nilsson

Climate and health researcher

Umeå University
Sweden

Maria Nilsson, Associate Professor, research fellow at the Department of Epidemiology and Global Health, Umeå University, Sweden; a social scientist who holds a PhD in epidemiology and public health sciences. Her main focus is climate change and health, with a specific interest in adaptation, communication and vulnerable populations. She leads projects in low to high income countries. Professor Nilsson was the integrating editor for health in the 2015 "Lancet Commission - Health and climate change: policy responses to protect public health" and co-leads the working group on adaptation, planning, and resilience for health in the annual follow up till 2030; "The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change". She was awarded a fellowship from the Swedish Institute for Global Health Transformation (SIGHT), under the auspices of the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences, for global health leadership. Prof. Nilsson was a member of the European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC) working group on climate change and health. A report published by EASAC in 2019 focused on climate change and health, discussing risks in Europe, particularly in the near future and the opportunities for adaptation and mitigation. She was the guest editor for two climate change and health focused supplements in the international peer-reviewed Open Access journal *Global Health Action*, i) "Climate Change and Health in Vietnam" and ii) "Climate change impacts on working people". In connection to her projects she is engaged in increasing the understanding of climate change and health impacts, working actively to feed research evidence into policy in practice.



Panelist

Andy Haines

Professor of Environmental Change and Public Health

London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
United Kingdom

Andy Haines was Director of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine from 2001- October 2010. He has worked internationally, including in Nepal and the USA and chaired the Scientific Advisory Panel for the 2013 WHO World Health Report. He was a member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change for the 2 nd and 3 rd assessment exercises and was review editor for the health chapter in the 5 th assessment. He was chair of the Rockefeller /Lancet Commission on Planetary Health which published its report in 2015. He has led a number of Lancet series, co-chaired the working group which wrote the European Academies Science Advisory Council report on climate change and health, and is a member of several international bodies including the Rockefeller Economic Council on Planetary Health. He has published many papers in high impact journals on topics such as the effects of environmental change on health and the health co-benefits of low carbon policies. He is currently co-investigator on a number of research projects which focus on sustainable healthy food systems, complex urban systems for sustainability and health and the effects of climate change on health.



Panelist

Betty Barkha

PhD Candidate/ Research Assistant at Monash University

Monash GPS Centre, Monash University
Australia

Betty has been involved in development for over 10 years with organisations in the Asia-Pacific and focuses on using evidence-based advocacy as a tool for change. She is currently the youngest serving member on the board of directors for the CIVICUS alliance and the Association of Women in Development (AWID) and is an advisor with FRIDA Young Feminist Fund. She has been involved with the United Nations Major Group on Children & Youth and Major group on Women and is an alumnus of the Women Deliver Young Leaders Program. Betty's areas of interest are human rights, peace & security, climate justice, gender equity and resilience. Betty holds a Masters of Arts in Sociology and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Psychology. Betty was the Monash GPS Visiting Youth Fellow in Women's Rights in Asia and the Pacific in 2017 and is currently pursuing her PhD, which focuses on gender dimensions of climate change in the Pacific.



Panelist

Diarmid Campbell-Lendrum

Lead, climate and health

World Health Organization
Switzerland

Diarmid Campbell-Lendrum is the coordinator of the climate change and health programme at WHO Headquarters. His training is on the ecology of infectious disease and public health, and he has worked on climate change and health for 20 years. During that time, Diarmid has played key roles in the development of the first quantitative estimates of the overall health impacts of climate change, resolutions of the World Health Assembly, the first three WHO global conferences on health and climate, and the expansion of WHO's climate change and health programme, which has now provided direct support to over 30 low and middle income countries. Diarmid is author of over 80 journal papers, reports, and book chapters on the ecology and control of infectious disease, and on the health implications of global environmental change. He is a lead author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Extreme Events, of the health chapter of the 5th Assessment report of the IPCC, and of the first health report to the UN Climate Negotiations.



Panelist

Renzo Guinto

Chief Planetary Doctor

PH Lab
Philippines

A Filipino physician working at the nexus of global health and sustainable development, Dr. Renzo Guinto is the Chief Planetary Doctor of PH Lab - a 'glo-cal think-and-do tank' for advancing the health of both people and the planet. One of the staunchest, most exciting, and innovative voices for planetary health from the Global South, Renzo is the youngest and sole student member of the Editorial Advisory Board of The Lancet Planetary Health, the world's first planetary health journal, and a founding member of the Emerging Scholars Network of the Planetary Health Alliance, which is headquartered at Harvard University. Renzo recently finished his Doctor of Public Health degree at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health; for his doctoral thesis, Renzo investigated local health system responses to climate change in coastal municipalities in the Philippines. From September to December 2019 he joined the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp, Belgium as a Visiting Fellow, focusing on planetary health innovation and the decolonization of global health.

A global health 'deep generalist,' Renzo brings with him nearly a decade of experience in global health policy, research, advocacy, implementation, and innovation at local, national, regional, and international levels, covering the public and private sectors as well as civil society and the United Nations system, and spanning a diverse range of themes such as climate change, planetary health, universal health care, migrant health, global health security, noncommunicable diseases, global health governance and diplomacy, healthcare innovation, social determinants of health, among others. Previously, he worked for the Philippine Department of Health, International Organization for Migration, World Health Organization, World Bank, Health Care Without Harm, UP Manila Universal Health Care Study Group and Harvard Center for Climate, Health and the Global Environment. He received numerous prestigious fellowships including the New Voices Fellowship of the Aspen Institute in Washington, DC and the Emerging Voices for Global Health in Cape Town, South Africa.

Renzo obtained his Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of the Philippines Manila (under the accelerated INTARMED program), and received additional training from the University of Oxford, Copenhagen School of Global Health, University of the Western Cape in South Africa, and East-West Center in Hawaii. Renzo has traveled to and lectured in nearly 40 countries; published more than 50 articles in scientific journals, books and popular media; and directed and produced short films that communicate the message of planetary healing to the world.



Panelist

Sandhya Singh

Director, Non-Communicable Diseases

National Department of Health
South Africa

