

MANIFESTO CLIMATE IS HEALTH, HEALTH IS CLIMATE

The climate crisis is a health crisis. The scientific evidence is clear, as is the concrete experience of billions of people around the world who are suffering its effects daily in various ways, especially in health.

Global warming manifests itself in the intensification and increased frequency of extreme weather events, such as unprecedented rainfall and flooding, landslides, heatwaves, prolonged droughts, and forest fires. These events directly and indirectly impact the health of communities by altering the epidemiological profile and global disease burden, causing an increase in cardiorespiratory diseases, affecting mental health, generating food insecurity, and increasing waterborne, vector-borne, and other infectious diseases. The World Bank predicts that climate change could cause 21 million additional deaths by 2050 due to five factors: extreme heat, diarrhea, stunting growth, malaria, and dengue. At the same time, it puts pressure on the Health Economic-Industrial Complex and healthcare infrastructure at all levels of care, affecting the production and distribution of vaccines, medicines, and strategic supplies, as well as logistical, water, and energy security, weakening the sector's ability to respond to the growing demand for healthcare and compromising the guarantee of the right to health.

Climate change affects everyone's health, but its consequences are significantly more harmful to the most vulnerable populations, both in cities and in rural areas and ecosystems impacted by land use change and pollution. Indigenous peoples, 'Quilombolas', riverside communities, the elderly, children (including those not yet born), women, black and brown people, and workers in situations of greater exposure to risks are among the population groups most vulnerable to the climate crisis. Many of them are precisely those who contribute least to the origin of the problem. Added to this, as an extra layer of challenges, is the lack of access to health, sanitation, and social assistance services. For all these reasons, socially just climate adaptation must prioritize health equity.

In 2024, the impacts of climate change became evident in Brazil, which recorded the hottest year in its history since the National Institute of Meteorology (INMET) began taking measurements in 1961. The climate tragedy in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, the unprecedented droughts in the North region, combined with forest and field fires, in addition to the most intense dengue epidemic ever experienced in the country, are events that demonstrated the vulnerability of the health of populations and healthcare infrastructure in the face of this crisis. The importance of establishing a robust response from the health sector to the climate crisis in Brazil has become evident. This is crucial for building a resilient healthcare sector that can simultaneously adapt and respond to emergencies, while also promoting sustainable, low-carbon operations, reducing its own emissions, which represent 4.4% of national emissions.

The climate crisis has its origins in unsustainable production processes that cause intense damage to ecosystems and alter the dynamics of the biosphere, such as the burning of fossil



fuels, which, in addition to increasing the average temperature of the planet, is responsible for most of the air pollution—the cause of death for 8 million people worldwide in 2021 alone. At the same time, in Brazil, deforestation for livestock and the expansion of agricultural frontiers, associated with aerial spraying of herbicides, dramatically reduce the biodiversity of flora and fauna and the capacity for ecosystem restoration. Added to these factors are changes in land use. In the Brazilian context, these have been the main factors responsible for national constraints, which severely impact the traditional ways of life and health of Indigenous, Quilombolas, riverside communities, and rural workers, among others. Thus, we face a triple planetary crisis—the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and pollution.

The impacts of climate change on health will only increase if global emissions remain the same or, worse, continue to grow. To address this crisis and protect our health and well-being, a set of changes is needed that includes a rapid transition to renewable and clean energy, sustainable public transportation, and sustainable land use, in addition to combating social inequalities. While the world's wealthiest countries have been and continue to be the most responsible for climate change and must take comprehensive action to mitigate it, Brazil can—and must—help lead this transformation.

We, the organizations and individuals who have signed this Manifesto, believe that solutions for health can be solutions for the climate. By recognizing that “Climate is Health, Health is Climate,” we are building a proposal for change and incorporation, based on the rich history of the health sector in Brazil in the pursuit of justice and equity, echoing the motto “Democracy is Health, Health is Democracy,” which was central during the establishment of health as a citizen's right and a duty of the state in the 1988 Federal Constitution. We believe that, in the current context, “Climate is Health, Health is Climate” means striving to achieve the interconnected goals of health equity and social and climate justice.

We also recognize that our efforts in Brazil are part of a growing international movement of health professionals, organizations, and healthcare systems that are advocating for broad climate action around the world to promote a just transition and the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

As part of this global movement, we are committed to:

- Take action to protect people's health from the risks posed by climate change, seeking equity for the most vulnerable and exposed groups.
- Educating and training professionals, health workers, and students from health courses on how to address the impacts of climate change.
- Respect and contribute to the protection of the integrity and knowledge of traditional communities and peoples, including knowledge about medicinal plants and the environments in which these populations have lived for centuries, as practical solutions for addressing the climate crisis.



- Raise our voices and use our credibility with the community to communicate the urgency of the crisis and the solutions that protect health and the climate.
- Produce and disseminate data and evidence on the impacts (including economic) of climate on health and on the benefits of mitigation and adaptation measures for the sector.
- Consider the concepts of Planetary Health and One Health as guidelines for governance, actions, and climate-health integration policies.
- Support the implementation of the Brazilian Climate Adaptation Plan, especially in the health sector, and the Belém Action Plan on Health and Climate.
- Develop and implement plans to decarbonize healthcare services, monitoring and reducing their greenhouse gas emissions.
- Support ecological transformation in the Health Economic-Industrial Complex to protect and promote the development of national productive capacity, while aligning its trajectory with net-zero and the Paris Agreement.
- Advocate for adaptation to a just transition, with digital inclusion and the incorporation of telemedicine tools as an essential component of continuity of care.
- Build and support policies and measures that enable the adaptation of healthcare systems and services to the impacts of climate change, such as the increase in extreme weather events and climate-sensitive chronic and communicable diseases.
- Build resilient healthcare systems so that health organizations and facilities are better equipped and adapted to withstand the impacts of climate change, while reducing their own emissions and impacts.
- Strengthen health surveillance systems and early response capacity to the impacts of extreme weather events.
- Make use of climate finance for health and health finance for climate.
- Integrate policies, actions, and data with other sectors such as Environment, Infrastructure, Transportation, Energy, Agriculture, and others to ensure the integration of health into broader climate action.
- Advocate for the reduction of pesticide use in agricultural production to protect biodiversity and human health. Support agroecology as a strategy to address climate change.
- Strengthen health actions to promote intergenerational justice to ensure the rights of future generations.



- Support the strategy of preventing the primary causes of climate change, contributing to an energy transition towards renewable energy, and the sustainable and fair use of land towards health equity and climate justice.