

We can and must do something

Andrea Bellone

Academy of Emergency Medicine and Care, Pavia, Italy

The environmental consequences of climate change are well known. The rise in the sea-level, increasing temperatures and more extreme weather events, increased droughts, flooding, and wildfires are impacting human health and lives. Temperature and humidity are the most consistent associations with infectious diseases and respiratory, cardiovascular, and neurological outcomes. Temperature is also directly related to mortality and healthcare service use.¹⁻³

The most important cause of global warming is the emissions of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, mainly carbon dioxide (CO₂). The last year (2023) the amount of CO₂ production in the world (fossil origin), was the largest.⁴

Prof. Petteri Taalas, Secretary-general of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) reports: “despite decades of warnings from the scientific community, thousand of pages reports, and dozens of climate conferences, we are still headings in the wrong direction”.

But we no longer have time because the consequences of climate change will be very dangerous and will cause an increase in mortality by about 30% in the next twenty years. However, the politicians don't seem to understand what is happening and what is mandatory to do immediately.

This is why we can't wait for the decisions of our rulers. We need to change our lifestyle and start changing the little things around us. Therefore it is no longer possible to talk about human health avoiding talking about its close relationship with climate

change. My purposes are: i) to force every medical conference to include at least one session related to climate change in its program; ii) to avoid any plastic object in the conference package; iii) to insert an environmental protection logo in all the slides presented.

It's time to act without losing even a minute.

References

1. Perera F, Nadeau K. Climate change, fossil-fuel pollution, and children's health. *NEJM* 2022;386:2303-14.
2. Portier C, Tart K, Carter S. A human health perspective on climate change a report Outlining the research needs on the human health effects of climate change. *Environmental Health Perspectives and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences*; 2010.
3. Watts N, Amann M, Arnell N, et al. The 2020 report of the Lancet countdown on health and climate change: responding to converging crises. *Lancet* 2021; 397:129–70.
4. Battle MO, Raynor R, Kesler S, Keeling R. Technical Note: The impact of industrial activity on the amount of atmospheric O₂, *Atmos. Chem Phys Discuss* [preprint] 2023: <https://doi.org/10.5194/acp-2022-765>

Correspondence: Andrea Bellone, Academy of Emergency Medicine and Care, Pavia, Italy.

E-mail: andreabellone@libero.it

Key words: climate change, health, mortality.

Conflict of interest: the author declares no potential conflict of interest confirms accuracy.

Received: 17 January 2024.

Accepted: 6 February 2024.

Early view: 29 February 2024.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License (by-nc 4.0).

©Copyright: the Author(s), 2024

Licensee PAGEPress, Italy

Emergency Care Journal 2024; 20:12290

doi:10.4081/ecj.2024.12290

Publisher's note: all claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers. Any product that may be evaluated in this article or claim that may be made by its manufacturer is not guaranteed or endorsed by the publisher.