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Climate & Health News

Newsletter of the JHU-UPF Public Policy Center Climate Change Working Group



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Health Impacts

News

Book review: ["The Uninhabitable Earth" puts urgency of climate challenge on the map](#)

It's worse, much worse, than you think. Boiling cities, burned-out forests, acidic oceans, increasing pandemics, fertile soil transmuted into deserts and ever-increasing extinctions. "This is something ... impacting absolutely every aspect of our lives in the decades ahead unless we change course somewhat dramatically... the psychology of everyone on the planet in, say 2075, will be shaped by these forces," says author David Wallace-Wells. – *Rolling Stone*



As uncertainty and denial about climate change have diminished, they have been replaced by similarly paralyzing feelings of panic, anxiety, and resignation. Wallace-Wells has an overall hopeful message that seeks to motivate by enhancing urgency. Credit: Mason Trinca / The Washington Post / Getty

Read more:

- [More women say they will not have children because of climate change – USA Today](#)
- [What makes a catastrophic flood and are we seeing more of them? – New York Times](#)
- [England could run short of water in 25 years according to Environment Agency – The Guardian](#)



Science

[New ways epidemiology can contribute to climate policy](#)

A variety of recent and ongoing developments in climate science are creating new avenues for epidemiological contributions to public health policy. Authors outline three developing areas of climate science that are creating opportunities for high-impact epidemiological advances in the near future: (1) climate attribution studies, (2) subseasonal to seasonal forecasts, and (3) decadal predictions.

Anderson et al. (2019). The future of climate epidemiology: Opportunities for advancing health research in the context of climate change. Am J Epidemiol. Mar 16. pii: kwz034. doi: 10.1093/aje/kwz034. [Epub ahead of print]

Read more:

- [Five climate-sensitive tropic diseases need more global attention](#)
- [Seasonality and the effects of weather on Campylobacter infections](#)

Adaptation

News

[US cities and localities urged to build resilience in new science report](#)

A new report by the National Academies of Sciences based on 13 US cities which experienced “shock events,” finds these localities must better prepare for more frequent and severe disasters from hurricanes, floods and other hazards by stepping up disaster preparedness. Specifically, they recommend broad participation, measuring resilience, linking policy and budgeting, and employing financial tools like catastrophe bonds.

– Scientific American



A boat works to lay orange oil booms around one of the Chandeleur Islands off the coast south of New Orleans, Louisiana after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, on May 4, 2010. Credit: Stan Honda / Getty Images

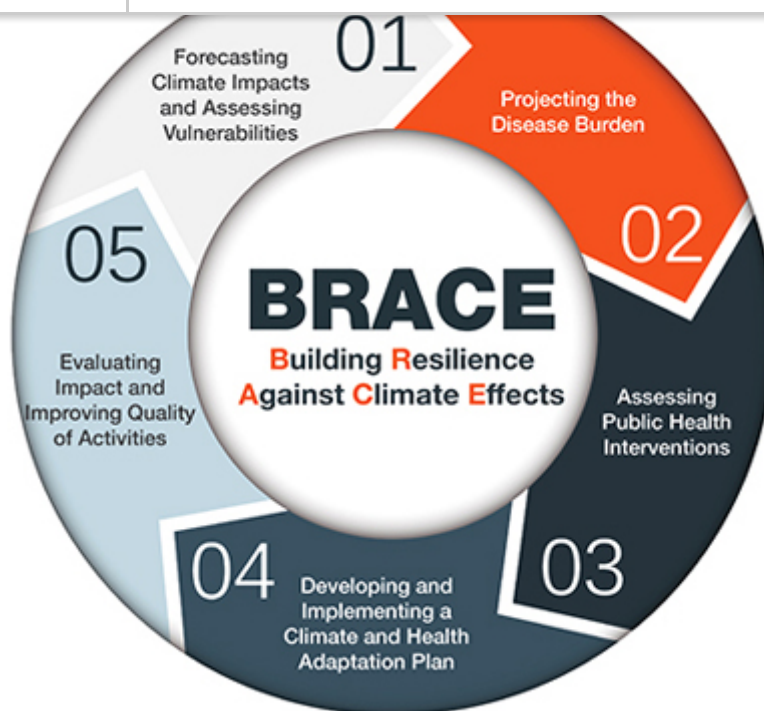
Read more:

- [Cities and health and sprawl](#) – National Geographic
- [Low-cost resilient housing may be key in flood-prone areas](#) – Fast Company
- [Affordable self-heating future housing](#) – Christian Science Monitor

Science

National climate adaptation program for local health departments in the US - BRACE

Authors reviewed the US national climate adaptation program for public health supported by the BRACE framework. They concluded the program can increase local public health capacity, partnerships and planning capacity to address climate change, and that other local jurisdictions may benefit from the experience of the local health programs reviewed. Grossman et al. (2019). *Minigrants to Local Health Departments: An Opportunity to Promote Climate Change Preparedness*. J Public Health Manag Pract. 25(2):113-120.



Read more:

- [Drought resilience and health in Ethiopia](#)
 - [Adapting for spectator heat comfort for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics](#)
 - [Climate change health adaptation in South Africa](#)
 - [Natural infrastructure for flood management in global cities](#)
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Mitigation

News

Can Copenhagen be net climate neutral by 2025?

The city aims to generate more renewable energy than the dirty energy it consumes. The ambitious target of Copenhagen, a city that is small (population 624,000), rich and which has residents who care a lot about climate change, can show the rest of the world what is possible. Changes involve how people get around, how they heat their homes, and what they do with their trash. – New York Times

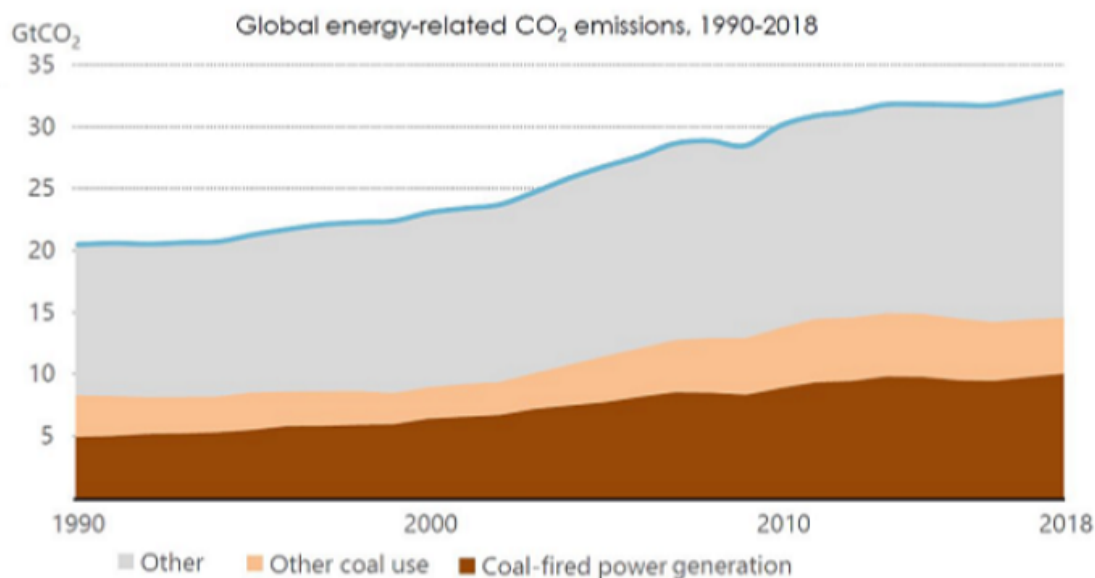


The Arc incinerator of Copenhagen, with its year-round ski slope visible on the roof. The stack burns 300 truckloads of garbage each day, including imported trash, and releases steam, not smoke.

Credit: [Charlotte de la Fuente](#)

Read more:

- [New coal plants in Asia drove increased carbon emissions in 2018](#) – ABC News
- [UN report on climate geoengineering risks commissioned](#) – National Geographic
- [Costa Rica's zero-carbon plan a model for others](#) – Wired
- ['Weather geeks' climate policy podcast](#) – Weather Channel



Science

Health co-benefits of urban mobility offset mitigation expenditures in Austrian cities

Researchers show that higher levels of physical exercise and reduced exposure to pollutants due to mitigation measures substantially decrease morbidity and mortality. Expenditures are mainly born by the public sector but are mostly offset by the emerging co-benefits.

Wolkinger et al. 2019. *Evaluating health co-benefits of climate change mitigation in urban mobility*. Int J Res Public Health 15(5). pii: E880.

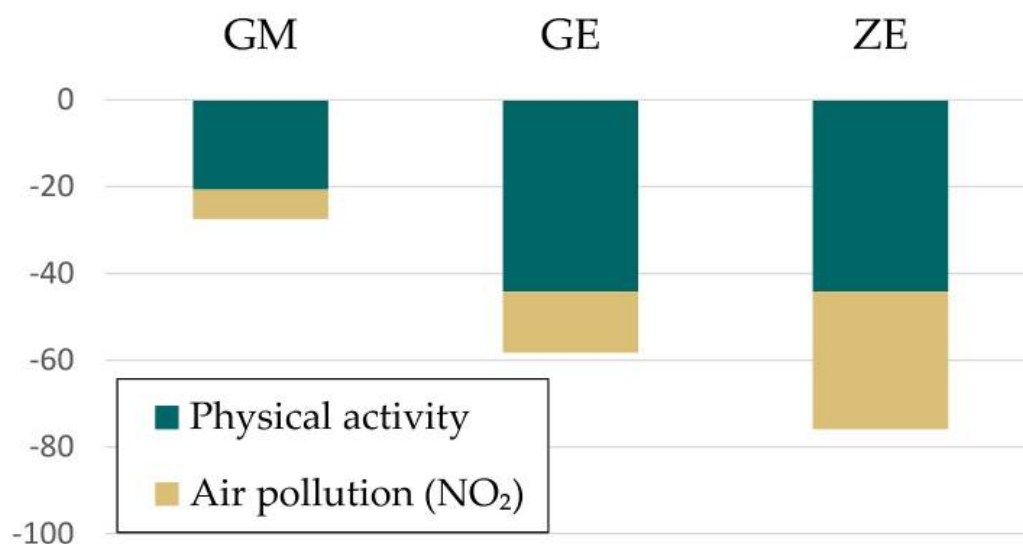


Figure 5: Changes in atraumatic mortality per 100,000 inhabitants of Graz, Linz and Vienna due to increased physical activity and cardiovascular disease mortality changes due to NO₂ decreases. GM = green mobility GE = green exercise ZE = zero emissions.

Read more:

- [Human health impact of air pollution in China](#)

Economics & Finance

Bill Gates funding agriculture 'hacks' to slow climate change

Gates' Breakthrough Energy Ventures is funding innovative solutions to reduce the pace and impact of global warming. Noting that agriculture is the second-largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, and the need to safeguard global food supplies with warmer and more unpredictable weather, Gates has funded start-ups creating wheat that replenishes the soil, and synthetic palm oil that avoids massive deforestation.

– Fast Company



Innovations in agriculture to slow down global warming. Photo: CloudVisual/[Unsplash](#)

Read more:

- [Climate change could reduce US GDP – The Economist](#)
- [Wall Street is masking the true cost of climate change for coastal homes – Bloomberg](#)



Houses are seen near high tide on Sept. 11, 2018, on Topsail Island, N.C.

Credit: Logan Cyrus / AFP / Getty Images

Science

Review: [Health care costs of extreme heat](#)

Authors found the healthcare costs of heat extremes have been poorly investigated (developed countries) or not reported (developing countries, where most heat-vulnerable populations reside). However, clearly exposure to extreme heat is causing a substantial economic burden on healthcare systems. Females, the elderly, low-income families, and ethnic minorities had the highest heat-related healthcare costs based on available evidence.

Wondmagegn et al. (2019). *What do we know about the healthcare costs of extreme heat exposure? A comprehensive literature review.* Sci Total Environ. 657:608-618.



Villagers try to catch fish in a dried-up pond in West Bengal, India. A deadly heat wave that swept across Asia in 2016 led to widespread drought that affected hundreds of millions in India. Such an intense and prolonged heat

Communication

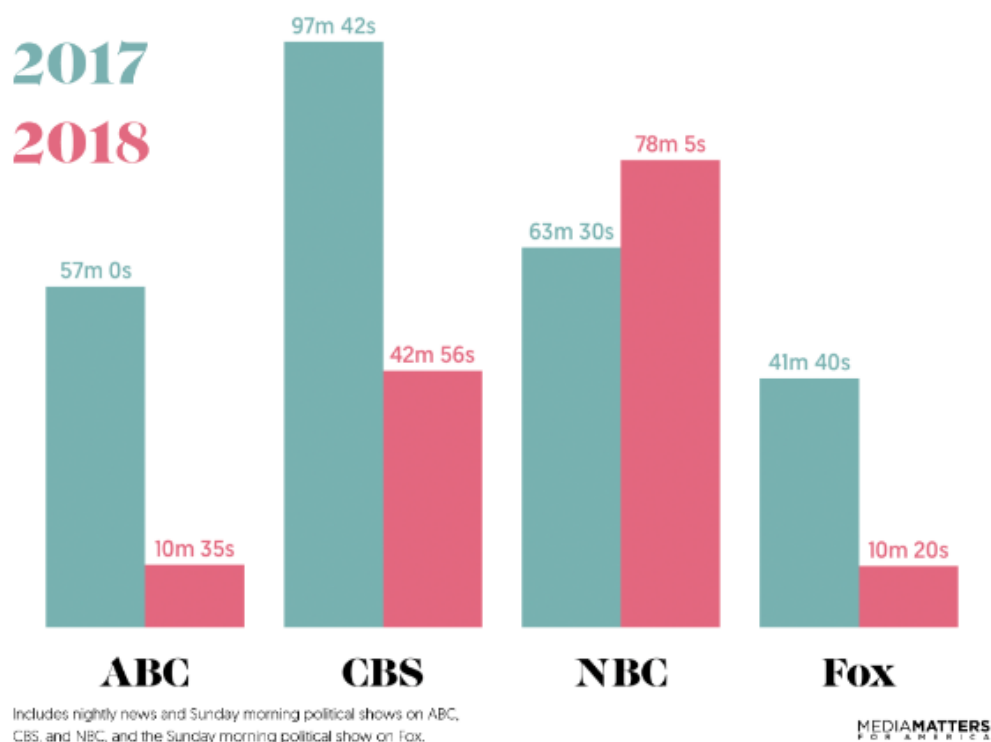
News

Climate change media coverage in 2018

A new study found that US broadcast news coverage of climate change declined by 45% in 2018 compared with 2017. Climate change was most often not mentioned in the context of reporting on hurricanes and other weather disasters. Solutions for climate-related hazards were mentioned infrequently. – Media Matters

Broadcast TV news climate coverage in 2017 and 2018 by network

Minutes of coverage on nightly news and Sunday morning political shows



Read more:

Science

Review: [Medicine's role in climate change](#)

Authors found US medical professionals are most concerned about air pollution and respiratory complications, extreme weather events, and infectious and vector-borne diseases; and least concerned about migration and stresses to sanitation systems. Partnerships between health care and public agencies hold the greatest potential for positive impact. Medicine's efforts to address climate change are seen as fractured, and lacking expertise for effectiveness.

Graham et al. (2019). *A systematic review of peer-reviewed literature authored by medical professionals regarding US biomedicine's role in responding to climate change*. *Pre Med Rep*. 13:132-138.



A poster from the WWF Belgium FishMen campaign, designed to help people think about what they could do in their daily lives to make an impact on climate change. [More info here.](#)

Read more:

- [Public perception of extreme heat risks across US localities](#)

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