

Position Statement on Climate Change

WHEREAS there is scientific consensus that climate change is happening and that it is largely due to human influence;¹

WHEREAS climate-related health impacts and risks are evident in many parts of Canada and are expected to increase in the future.² These include heat-related illness and death, weather-related impacts, deteriorating air quality, water and food-borne contamination, health effects of ultraviolet radiation, and vector-borne and zoonotic diseases;³



WHEREAS children and other vulnerable populations, in Canada and globally, are disproportionately and adversely affected by climate change health impacts;^{4,5,6,7}

RECOGNIZING that there are multiple health co-benefits⁸ to taking action to mitigate climate change including improving air quality, encouraging active transportation and healthy eating, increasing protection from solar radiation and heat, and opportunities to reduce poverty and increase health equity;

RECOGNIZING that there are solutions to address climate change that are sustainable, equitable, fair and economically viable;⁹

ACKNOWLEDGING that immediate and strong action is needed to limit warming, drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and adapt to current and future impacts of climate change to protect current and future generations;¹⁰

CELEBRATING the leadership shown by youth around the world, including in Canada, to protest inaction¹¹ in the face of the climate crisis;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that CPCHE advocates for, supports, and promotes strong policies and actions on:

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate climate change

1. Pricing greenhouse gas emissions or using other market mechanisms to decrease greenhouse gas pollution;
2. Regulatory measures to decrease greenhouse gas pollution;
3. Greenhouse gas emission reduction targets to limit warming to 1.5° C as recommended by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC);

Investing in climate solutions

4. Investments in and incentives for renewable energy development and use;
5. Investments in and incentives for energy conservation;
6. Phasing out of fossil fuel subsidies, starting with immediate action to level the playing field to accelerate the growth of clean energy technologies;
7. Investments in and incentives for agricultural practices that minimize fossil fuel inputs, promote carbon sequestration and support a shift towards an increasingly plant-based diet;
8. A 'just transition,' as jobs and markets shift with a greening economy;

Supporting climate adaptation measures for health

9. Measures to prepare for and adapt to climate change health impacts, prioritizing the most vulnerable populations and vulnerable regions;
10. The development of sustainable low carbon and climate resilient communities;
11. Active and sustainable modes of transportation alongside fuel efficiency and land use planning policies to reduce transportation-related emissions;
12. Identifying and measuring health co-benefits of climate action, e.g., air quality, physical activity, healthy eating, poverty reduction, health equity, and mental health;
13. Awareness of the health and health equity impacts of climate change on children and other vulnerable populations, and on vulnerable regions including the far North and coastal communities.



Notes:

- 1 Bush, E. & Lemmen, D.S., editors (2019). Canada's Changing Climate Report. Ottawa: Government of Canada. 444 p.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Health Canada (2019). Climate Change and Health: Health Effects. (accessed June 11, 2019) <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/climate-change-health.html>
- 4 Health Canada (2019). Climate Change and Health: Populations at Risk (accessed June 11, 2019) <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/climate-change-health/populations-risk.html>
- 5 Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE). Climate Change Toolkit for Health Professionals: Module 3 – Climate Change Health Impacts across Canada. April 2019
- 6 Ahdoot, S., Pacheco, S.E., & The Council on Environmental Health (2015). "Global Climate Change and Children's Health." *Pediatrics*. 136, no. 5: e1468–84. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2015-3233>;
- 7 Perera, F. P. (2017). Multiple Threats to Child Health from Fossil Fuel Combustion: Impacts of Air Pollution and Climate Change. *Environmental Health Perspectives*, 125, no. 2: 141–48. <https://doi.org/10.1289/EHP299>
- 8 Canadian Public Health Association (2017). Lancet Countdown 2017 Report: Briefing for Canadian Policy Makers. https://www.cpha.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/advocacy/2017_lancet_canada_brief.pdf
- 9 Community Research Connections (2015). Acting on Climate Change: Solutions from Canadian Scholars. https://www.crcresearch.org/sites/default/files/u443/sdc_short_en_lowres_10march.pdf
- 10 International Panel on Climate Change, IPCC (2018). Global Warming of 1.5 °C. Summary for Policy Makers. IPCC Special Report. www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/10/SR15_SPM_version_stand_alone_LR.pdf
- 11 <https://fridaysforfuture.ca/>; <https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/the-uncanny-power-of-greta-thunbergs-climate-change-rhetoric>; <https://rwer.wordpress.com/2019/04/23/greta-thunbergs-speech-on-economic-growth-at-londons-houses-of-parliament/>

Canadian Partnership for Children's Health and Environment (CPCHE) – Partner Organizations

