Healthy Planet – Healthy People: A new guiding principle?

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EUFORS 22nd Inter-Parliamentary Meeting on Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
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But when it comes to the climate crisis, we have done things the wrong way round so far!

Medicine knows: Diagnosis before treatment is vital.

Source: The Lancet
„Research shows, that showing people research doesn’t work.“

Dr. John Sterman, MIT and Climate Interactive
Climate Communication

Studies proof high effect of health argument

Health important for all groups of society, eye opener, high level of cross-party consent

Those who perceive health risks from climate change are more likely to approve climate protection measures

Recommend Climate Protection = Health Protection
As an argument

Studies proof high effect of health argument
Healthy Planet – Healthy People

German NGO since 2020

Promote public awareness: healthy people can only exist on a healthy planet.

Climate communication that reaches, moves and inspires people to action.

Focus on solutions, a visionary approach and a good sense of humor.
What is the story?

About climate change and health
Climate change is the greatest global health threat facing the world in the 21st century.

But it is also the greatest opportunity to redefine the social and environmental determinants of health.
Almost all 10 threats to global health...

... are linked to
- climate crisis
- biodiversity loss
- planetary boundaries

Source: WHO 2019
Doesn’t matter in Europe?

...yes, it does.
Climate: Europe warming faster than rest of world (IPCC)

Droughts, fires and floods: How climate change will impact Europe

Climate crisis made summer drought 20 times more likely, scientists find

Record northern hemisphere drought in 2022 hit crops and power stations, worsening food and energy crises
Air pollution: Death Cause No 1

Limiting air pollution 'could prevent 50,000 deaths in Europe'

World Health Organization estimates air pollution kills more than 7 million people each year.

Cities such as Paris, with their crowded streets and high-energy use, are hotspots for illness and diseases linked to air pollution. Photograph: Gonzalo FUentez/Reuters

Limiting air pollution to levels recommended by the World Health Organization could prevent more than 50,000 deaths in Europe annually, according to research.

Source: The Lancet Planetary Health 2021, Ärzteblatt 2017
Heatwaves hit the vulnerable ones
Floods at our doorsteps

Belgium hit with renewed flooding amid heavy rain

Parts of Wallonia, the southern French-speaking region of Belgium, were particularly hard hit by the new floods. The town of Dinant saw considerable damage, with cars having been swept away by the waters.

Sources: BPB, DW, The Independent
Tropical diseases in the middle of Europe

Chikungunya Virus in the New World

Tiger Mosquito in Europe

Health threat or opportunity?
There is still time to decide

Greatest health threat or greatest opportunity?

Without action on climate change...
- Child malnutrition is projected to increase by 20-25 million by 2050
- Climate change can increase risks of migration and conflict by causing economic crises and exacerbating poverty
- Infectious diseases such as dengue and malaria will spread and affect more people
- Water-borne diseases like diarrhoea and cholera are projected to increase significantly, due to more flooding and more droughts across the world

If we act on climate change...
- Sustainable development and poverty reduction will be easier to achieve, the economic impacts of extreme weather will be lower, and livelihoods more secure
- Clean water & sanitation can improve health now, and reduce vulnerability to climate change
- Crop yields and consequently nutrition - will be improved, due to fewer droughts, floods and better growing temperatures, if we cut emissions and invest in adaptation.
Co-Benefit
Planetary Health Diet

Source: Molly Katzen
Co-Benefit
Active mobility

Source: realutopien.info
Co-Benefit

Healthier cities

Source: realutopien.info
Co-Benefit
Renewable Energy

Source: Co-Benefits.info
Two concepts gaining ground...

**PLANETARY HEALTH:**
The Health of Human Civilization and the Natural Systems on which it depends

**ONE HEALTH:**
Sustainably balance and optimize the health of humans, animals, plants and ecosystems

PH: Rockefeller Foundation–Lancet Commission on planetary health, 2015, OH: UN Quadripatite, One Health Joint Action Plan 2022
... the approach mobilizes multiple sectors, disciplines and communities at varying levels of society to work together to foster well-being and tackle threats to health and ecosystems, while addressing the collective need for clean water, energy and air, safe and nutritious food, taking action on climate change, and contributing to sustainable development.
One Health in international politics

PLOS PATHOGENS

One Health: A new definition for a sustainable and healthy future

One Health High-Level Expert Panel (OHHEP), Mikko B. Adhikari, Revens L. Mburu, Cees Van den Bremt, Andrew K. Mwebaza, Samira Asgary, Jochen Kugeler, Fidel Bilkis, Solene A. Biakono, Natalia Caceres, Natalia Chiribiri, Dominique F. Ciaran, Ann-Helen Claudiny, Laura R. Ciacci, Cesare Arena, Andrew A. Cunningham, Osman Dar, [...] Loi Zhou, 

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The Need for a One Health Approach to Zoonotic Diseases and Antimicrobial Resistance

One Health in the development of a Zoonoses Control

The European Union One Health 2020 Zoonoses Report

European Food Safety Authority

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
Renewables for Health
Not just a technical or economic question...

Health benefits of accelerated energy transition in Germany (1.5°C compatible pathway):

More than half of the air pollutant emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOX), sulphur oxides (SOX) and primary particulate matter (PM10) as well as mercury emitted by coal power plants between 2018 and 2030 would be avoided.

More than 20,000 premature deaths, 9,400 hospital admissions, and 420,000 asthma attacks in children as well as around 6.7 million lost working days could be avoided.

Between 18 and 53 billion Euro of damage costs between 2018 and 2030 can be potentially saved.

Source: cobenefits.info, Knowledge Commons 2022