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Community of Practice Update

The 2020 report of The *Lancet* Countdown on health and climate change: responding to converging crises

Every year since 2017, the international collaborative known as *The Lancet Countdown on health and climate change* releases what is likely the world's most authoritative and comprehensive report on health and climate change. The collaborative is made up of 35 academic institutions and UN agencies. The 2020 version was released online on December 2 and can be downloaded [here](#).

The sub-title in this fourth report is: “responding to converging crises”. As in earlier versions, the report provides updated information on 45 indicators organized under five sections all linked to health: impacts; adaptation; mitigation; economics; and public and political engagement.

This 2020 report is particularly significant in that it is five years since the historic [2015 Paris Agreement](#) in which the global community pledged to limit global warming to “well below 2° C”. In this context, here are some highlights of the 2020 report.

It's a sobering report, beginning with the reminder that we've just experienced the five hottest years since 2015 with a rise in the global temperature of 1.2°C. Carbon dioxide emissions continue to rise steadily with worsening impacts, vulnerabilities and exposures. Of particular concern is the observation that these [worsening effects disproportionately impact on populations who have contributed least to the climate change situation](#). In short, we have a challenge of climate justice, both within and between countries. Vulnerable populations are more affected by increased heat and extremes of weather events.

In addition to more direct health impacts, the changing climate has “downstream effects”, such as food insecurity, increases in infectious diseases, rising sea levels, and continuing effects of global energy patterns—for example, the use of coal has increased over the past two years after an earlier reduction in global coal use.

On a more encouraging note, there is steadily [increasing engagement](#) of health professionals with global climate change issues, including adaptations in national health systems, increased advocacy activities (for example, commitments by health institutions to divest assets away from fossil fuels). Publications of research on health and climate change have increased substantially.

Finally, this report has a significant section on the interactions between the two “crises” of the global COVID-19 pandemic and climate change. In both cases, urgent action is needed, using the best available scientific evidence supported by clear and consistent communications and stronger, innovative collaboration.

I strongly [encourage members of our Community of Practice](#) to take some time during the upcoming holidays to read this important report and think about what we might do more effectively in the new year—both individually and collectively.

<https://bcccoalitioninstitute.com/>

We want to give warm holiday wishes to all of our community members this year. From the BCCI team, thank you for your endless support and contribution. We look forward to working together in the new year.



Be sure to check out the new additions to the **BCCI resource library** where you can find carefully selected readings, presentations, and session guides.

Have ideas for BCCI-3?

We'd love to hear from you! Submit your ideas to bcci.community@gmail.com

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