European Academies

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Science Advisory Council

European Science Academies at COP26: There is No Human Health without Planetary Health

The Mediterranean and the Middle East regions are particularly vulnerable to effects of climate change on health. Heat related deaths, water shortage, food scarcity, infectious diseases, air pollution, and health issues of displaced populations will be the inevitable consequences of the ongoing disruption in ecological and socio-economic systems. This is the message EASAC, uniting 28 national science academies, will bring to the Climate Change Summit in Glasgow on 1 Nov, 08:15-09:15 GMT (09:15-10:15 CET), in the EU Pavilion.

EASAC teams up with the European Environment Agency, the Center for International Climate Research and Women Leaders for Planetary Health to discuss knowledge development and to make health policymakers and stakeholders aware of the necessity and benefits of sharing efforts.

Health risks will increase as climate change intensifies through a range of pathways including:

- Increased exposure to high temperatures and extreme events such as floods and droughts, air pollution and allergens;
- Weakening of food and nutrition security;
- Increased incidence and changing distribution of some infectious diseases (including mosquito-borne, food-borne and water-borne diseases);
- Growing risk of forced migration.

"Climate-related health issues must have a higher profile in the formulation of policy in many sectors beyond the formal responsibility of health sector policymakers. There must also be integration in the use of the scientific evidence for policy not only between disciplines and countries, but also across sectors," says Prof. Sir Andy Haines of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

The Mediterranean and Middle East regions are "hotspots" for climate change-related health risks

The Mediterranean and Middle East regions are "hotspots", and the effects of climate change are greater here than in other regions. But there is also less information currently available to

quantify the effects, understand attribution, and implement solutions in this region compared to some others.

Coordination of effort is essential to understand trade-offs, avoid inadvertent consequences and capture synergies for diverse policy actions.

Prof. Sir Andy Haines of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine says: “There are unprecedented opportunities to capitalise on scientific advances worldwide to develop the solutions, adapted to local contexts, for all regions. Not least the recent heavy rainfalls and floodings in Sicily give us a taste of what otherwise could be ahead of us,” concludes Sir Haines.

Event Details:

1 November, 08:15-09:15 GMT (09:15-10:15 CET)

To attend online, please register here www.cop26eusideevents.eu, login and select the event at the above mentioned time and day. Any updates will be posted here: https://easac.eu/meetings-events/details/cop-eu-side-event-on-climate-change-and-health-in-europe/

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About the European Academies’ Science Advisory Council (EASAC)
EASAC is formed by the national science academies of the EU Member States, Norway, Switzerland and United Kingdom, to collaborate in giving advice to European policymakers. EASAC provides a means for the collective voice of European science to be heard. Through EASAC, the academies work together to provide independent, expert, evidence-based advice about the scientific aspects of European policies to those who make or influence policy within the European institutions.

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