

Editorial

Health and climate crisis: the urgency of an integrated agenda at COP 30

Saúde e crise climática: a urgência de uma agenda integrada na COP 30

Salud y crisis climática: la urgencia de una agenda integrada en la COP 30

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Abstract

The 30th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Belém do Pará, transcends the diplomatic and environmental sphere to take on urgent contours of global public health. The concept of One Health provides a robust theoretical and practical framework for understanding and addressing this crisis. The health dimension of the climate crisis requires that 30th Conference of the Parties debates go beyond the traditional boundaries of environmental diplomacy. The emergence of an intersectoral approach is vital: climate policies must directly interact with health, food security, basic sanitation, and social justice policies. The future of global health will depend on the collective capacity to recognize that protecting the environment is, above all, protecting life. Discussing the climate crisis as a public health issue is not a rhetorical choice, but an ethical, scientific, legal, and political imperative.

Keywords: One Health; Right to Health; Global Health Strategies.

Resumo

A realização da 30ª Conferência das Partes da Convenção-Quadro das Nações Unidas sobre Mudança do Clima, em Belém do Pará, transcende o caráter diplomático e ambiental para assumir contornos urgentes de saúde pública global. O conceito de *One Health* — Saúde Única — fornece um arcabouço teórico e prático robusto para compreender e enfrentar essa crise. A dimensão sanitária da crise climática impõe que os debates da 30ª Conferência das Partes ultrapassem as fronteiras tradicionais da diplomacia ambiental. A emergência de uma abordagem intersectorial é vital: políticas climáticas devem dialogar diretamente com políticas de saúde, segurança alimentar, saneamento básico e justiça social. O futuro da saúde global dependerá da capacidade coletiva de reconhecer que a defesa do meio ambiente é, antes de tudo, defesa da vida. Discutir a crise climática como um tema de saúde pública não é uma escolha retórica, mas uma exigência ética, científica, jurídica e política.

Palavras-chave: Saúde Única; Direito à Saúde; Estratégias de Saúde Globais.

Resumen

La 30ª Conferencia de las Partes de la Convención Marco de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Cambio Climático, en Belém do Pará, trasciende el ámbito diplomático y ambiental para asumir contornos urgentes de salud pública global. El concepto de *One Health* — Una Sola Salud — ofrece un marco teórico y práctico sólido para comprender y enfrentar esta crisis. La dimensión sanitaria de la crisis climática impone que los debates de la 30ª Conferencia de las Partes vayan más allá de las fronteras

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tradicionales de la diplomacia ambiental. La emergencia de un enfoque intersectorial es vital: las políticas climáticas deben dialogar directamente con las políticas de salud, seguridad alimentaria, saneamiento básico y justicia social. El futuro de la salud global dependerá de la capacidad colectiva de reconocer que la defensa del medio ambiente es, ante todo, la defensa de la vida. Discutir la crisis climática como un tema de salud pública no es una elección retórica, sino una exigencia ética, científica, jurídica y política.

Palabras clave: Salud Única; Derecho a la Salud; Estrategias de Salud Globales.

The holding of the 30th Conference of the Parties (COP 30) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Belém (Pará/Brazil), transcends the diplomatic and environmental character to take on urgent global public health contours. Climate change is not just an ecological or economic problem; it is unquestionably a health crisis of planetary significance⁽¹⁾. Lethal heatwaves, the spread of vector-borne diseases, food and water insecurity, forced population displacement and mental health impacts are concrete manifestations of how climate breakdown threatens human well-being⁽²⁾.

The concept of One Health provides a robust theoretical and practical framework for understanding and tackling this crisis. By recognizing the interdependence between human, animal and environmental health, the paradigm breaks down sectoral fragmentation and guides integrated public policies⁽³⁾. It is imperative that COP 30 moves forward to incorporate this approach, aligning climate commitments with strategies to prevent and mitigate health risks, especially in areas of high socio-environmental vulnerability, such as the Amazon.

During the G20 meeting held in Brazil, the 1st Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change, Health and Equity already pointed to the climate crisis as a threat to global health, with disproportionate impacts on vulnerable populations. This recognition must, however, be converted into effective action: strengthening resilient health systems, investing in environmentally sensitive epidemiological surveillance and promoting nature-based solutions as adaptation tools⁽⁴⁾.

The choice of the Amazon as the venue for COP 30 symbolizes both a challenge and an opportunity. It is the largest tropical forest on the planet, a biome whose integrity is essential for global climate regulation and the maintenance of ecosystem services that are essential for health⁽⁵⁾. However, the region is facing critical processes, such as savannization and an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme events - phenomena that are already translating into measurable health impacts, such as outbreaks of vector-borne diseases and water crises⁽⁶⁾.

The health dimension of the climate crisis means that the COP30 debates must go beyond the traditional boundaries of environmental diplomacy. The emergence of an intersectoral approach is vital: climate policies must be in direct dialogue with health, food security, basic sanitation and social justice policies. The Amazon, in this sense, should not be reduced to an “exotic space” or a mere economic asset, but recognized as a living, culturally complex and biologically strategic territory.

The future of global health will depend on the collective ability to recognize that defending the environment is, first and foremost, defending life. Discussing the climate crisis as a public health issue is not a rhetorical choice, but an ethical, scientific, legal and political requirement. COP 30, by taking place in the heart of the world’s largest rainforest, has a historic responsibility to reaffirm this commitment to humanity.

Conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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