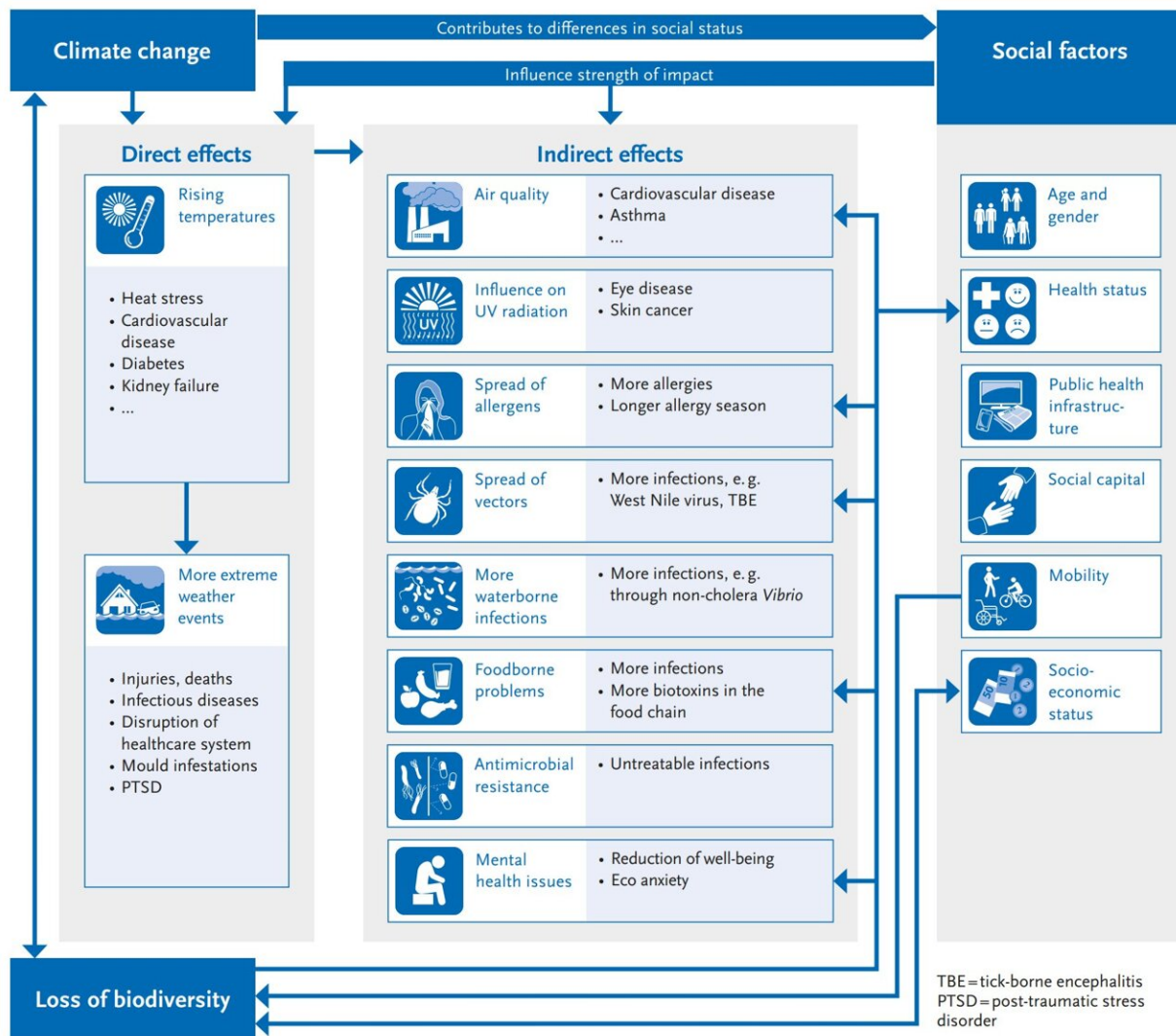


'Climate change is the greatest challenge facing humanity'—new status report on climate change and health

June 1 2023



Credit: *Climate change and public health in Germany – An introduction to the*

German status report on climate change and health (2023)

A new report, coordinated by the Robert Koch Institute (RKI), provides an overview of the health impacts of climate change and ways to counteract them. The publication was coordinated through the project KlimGesundAkt.

More than 90 authors from over 30 [research institutions](#) and authorities have worked on this report which will be published as a series of articles in three Special Issues of the Journal of Health Monitoring. The first part published on 1 June focuses on the impact of climate change on [infectious diseases](#). An introductory article outlines the complex field of climate change and health as a whole.

More heat-related deaths, new and increasing infectious diseases, increased exposure to allergens, a rise in [antibiotic resistance](#), more lung diseases as a result of increasing air pollution, more [skin cancer](#) due to increased UV radiation—these are some of the negative consequences of climate change for [public health](#).

"Climate change is the greatest challenge facing humanity, threatening our livelihoods and our secure future," this is how the heads of federal agencies working on public health topics in Germany begin their editorial for the new report.

The editorial authors lead eleven institutions: The Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance, the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, the Federal Office for Radiation Protection, the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, the Federal Centre for Health Education, German Federal Institute of Hydrology, the German Meteorological Service, the Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut, the Thünen

Institute, the German Environment Agency and the RKI.

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The first issue focuses on the impact of climate change on infectious diseases. Topics include vector- and rodent-borne infections, waterborne infections and intoxications, foodborne infections and intoxications, and antibiotic resistance. An introductory article outlines the field of climate change and health.

The second issue of the report, due to be published in the third quarter of 2023, focuses on [non-communicable diseases](#) that can be caused by heat and other [extreme weather events](#) such as floods, on the influence of climate change on allergic diseases, the consequences of altered UV radiation or higher air pollution levels, and the [impact of climate change](#) on mental health.

The third issue, which will be published in the fourth quarter of 2023, examines health equity with regard to the effects of climate change, the importance of target group-specific communication on climate change and highlights the need for action based on the recommendations formulated in the preceding articles.

"In addition to the various topic-specific recommendations, all contributions have one thing in common: they point to a continuing need for research. Extended monitoring of many of the health effects of climate change is also recommended," the editorial authors conclude. Climate change affects many other fields related to health, e.g. the construction industry or urban and regional development.

"Therefore, health-sensitive climate protection and climate adaptation require intersectoral cooperation and the continuous exchange between different actors in line with the ideas behind One Health and Health in All Policies," the authors of the editorial emphasize and have appropriately chosen the heading: "Together, we can counter the effects of [climate change](#)."

More information: Journal (part 1):
[www.rki.de/EN/Content/Health_M ... S03.html?nn=16760694](http://www.rki.de/EN/Content/Health_M...S03.html?nn=16760694)

Provided by Robert Koch Institute

Citation: 'Climate change is the greatest challenge facing humanity'—new status report on climate change and health (2023, June 1) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-06-climate-greatest-humanitynew-status-health.html>

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