

Report highlights opportunities to mitigate climate change to promote human health

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A new report involving an Exeter expert shows how action to mitigate climate change could promote human health.

Professor Lora Fleming, of the University of Exeter's European Center for Environment and Human Health, is one of the authors of the joint

Academy of Medical Sciences & Royal Society Working Group report
"A healthy future: tackling change and health together."

This joint report urges UK policy makers and funders to put [health benefits](#) at the heart of climate change discussions, debate and action, highlighting an increasing opportunity for the UK to take a global leadership role in the coming months and years in placing health at the center of climate action and demonstrating the health benefits that could be achieved.

Moreover, the report highlights the opportunities presented by the upcoming COP26 to build momentum around the incorporation of health in the climate narrative for future agendas.

Professor Lora Fleming said: "We're increasingly learning that the fate of our planet is inextricably linked with [human health](#). If we can work together to incorporate the recommendations of this report into the challenges ahead, the net-zero transition has the potential to save millions of lives worldwide over years to come and promote direct benefits from healthier lifestyles."

The report makes four over-arching recommendations:

- Leading the transition to Net Zero: As we tackle climate change, the UK Government can lead the world in ensuring the benefits of the transition to Net Zero are maximized for patients and the public in the UK and globally, by considering the health co-benefits of the transition in all areas of policy
- Integrating mitigation and adaptation measures: Well-designed actions to promote adaptation and integrate this with mitigation measures locally and nationally could reduce negative consequences of climate change.
- Developing metrics to measure [health impacts](#): As the net-zero

transition gains momentum, regularly assessing and reporting the health impacts of mitigation policies is critical for informing policy design and maximizing health benefits. Collaborative efforts between researchers and policy makers could help to strengthen existing assessments and embed robust measures which capture a broad range of health-related factors, including impacts on equity.

- The need for a transdisciplinary systems approach: Tackling climate change and maximizing health co benefits in tandem involves a complex integration of factors, which will require systems approaches and cross-sector working. Research design and implementation should look to reflect the complex nature of these issues and address evidence and data gaps, to better understand the complex interaction of [climate](#) and health.

Crucially, the report calls for evidenced, coordinated and equitable strategies that are co-developed across a range of sectors, to ensure the design and delivery of a successful and fair approach which maximizes potential [health](#) benefits. In working to incorporate this into the challenges ahead, the net-zero transition has the potential to save millions of lives worldwide over years to come and promote direct benefits from healthier lifestyles.

More information: The report is available online: acmedsci.ac.uk/file-download/12677226

Provided by University of Exeter

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