

## Medical associations declare a climate emergency

**The global ecological crisis poses a direct threat to human health. Within the medical profession, we consider the threat so great that rapid societal changes are needed. There is sufficient scientific evidence on the extent of the problems, and effective measures for correcting the situation already exist. In addition, research is needed to develop measures that are even more effective than what we have today. We demand decision-makers to act decidedly to stop climate change.**

Non-sustainable use of natural resources, the climate crisis and the loss of biodiversity are important threats to human health and have long-term consequences on the future of humans as a species. Without a healthy Earth, we do not have a prospect of a good and secure life for ourselves or future generations.

As of today, the global environmental crisis already has significant effects on human health. Climate change and the decrease in biodiversity increase the risk of new pandemics. Sea level rise and increased episodes of drought narrow the living space of human populations. If global warming and overuse of natural resources are not controlled, more parts of the world will become uninhabitable, forcing large numbers of people to migrate in the upcoming decades. This will also be reflected on our lives in Finland and Europe.

The environmental crisis is a multifaceted, wicked problem, in which we are simultaneously culprits and victims. Our welfare society has been built on the careless use of non-renewable natural resources. It is, however, no longer possible to maintain our living standards on overconsumption.

The healthcare sector, for its own part, causes a burden on nature and its resources. We as physicians recognise our own responsibility and want to be a part of a solution to the problem. We plead with health care professionals and decision-makers in health care organisations to work actively to achieve ecological sustainability. Every health care unit should consider sustainability in all their decisions and activities.

Finland as a stable and wealthy society, has both the means and a responsibility to act as a pioneer in sustainable development. The coronavirus pandemic should accelerate rather than delay implementing solutions. Decisions and acts to guide the entire society towards sustainability are needed now.

Our children and we only have one Earth. Our life and health depend on its well-being.

We join the World Medical Association in declaring a climate emergency. As physicians, we plead with decision-makers to limit global warming to less than two degrees Celsius, and to establish carbon neutrality by 2030. We request that you have the force to make the often difficult and unpleasant decisions that are needed in the transitions towards a sustainable society.

Finnish Medical Association Suomen Lääkäriliitto  
Finnish Dental Association Suomen Hammaslääkäriliitto  
Physicians for social responsibility Finland Lääkärin sosiaalinen vastuu ry  
The Finnish Medical Society Duodecim Suomalainen Lääkäriseura Duodecim ry  
Suomen Erikoislääkäriyhdistys ry  
General Practitioners in Finland Suomen Yleislääkärit GPF ry  
Finska Läkaresällskapet rf  
Nuorten Lääkärien Yhdistys ry  
Nuorten Hammaslääkärien Yhdistys ry  
Suomen Seniorilääkärit ry