

Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Working Group II Contribution to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report

“Climate change is a threat to human well-being and planetary health. Any further delay in concerted, anticipatory global action... will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all.” (IPCC Report, 2022, p.SPM-35)

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change have released their Sixth Assessment Report. This report highlights the environmental damage that has already occurred, the health impacts of climate change, and the increase in adverse catastrophic weather events which continue to threaten life and livelihoods. Climate change has increased the existing global socio-economic inequities, and risk reduction, justice and equity are critical issues to address. Rapid action now provides the world with a window of opportunity to safeguard a habitable future.

As midwives we are aware that climate change can have an adverse impact on health during pregnancy and how it can negatively affect the health of babies and children. We are also aware that climate change disproportionately affects marginalised groups in society. Action to mitigate environmental hazards such as air pollution, extreme heat and severe weather events is urgent. The Climate Change section on the College website (Take Action) has started to identify how midwives can identify ways to minimise their impact on the environment, both personally and professionally.

Key points from the IPCC Report

- Safeguarding and strengthening nature is the key to securing a liveable future.
- Climate resilient development is enabled when governments, civil society and the private sector make inclusive development choices that prioritise risk reduction, equity and justice.
- Societal choices and actions implemented in the next decade will determine the extent to which medium and long-term pathways will deliver higher or lower climate resilient development.
- Access to quality health care needs to be improved particularly for marginalised groups.
- Indigenous knowledge and sociocultural practices can support climate change mitigation and help to promote collective climate action.

Ora Taiao, the NZ Climate and Health Council has asked the Climate Change Commission to form a health group to promote inter-sectoral collaboration to ensure that health concerns are included in the Commission’s advice to government. Media release here [Human physical and mental health already affected by climate change – IPCC report - OraTaiao](#)

Read the full IPCC Report, summary for policy makers, and/ or the technical summary here [Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability | Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability \(ipcc.ch\)](#)

The IPCC Fact Sheet for Australasia is available here [PowerPoint Presentation \(ipcc.ch\)](#)

The next part of the IPCC report which is concerned with what people can do to halt climate change damage will be published in April.