

# **WHO and IFMSA Collaboration on UNFCCC article 6**

## **Bonn Climate Change Conference - 2013**

Public Health and Environment Department



## What is IFMSA?

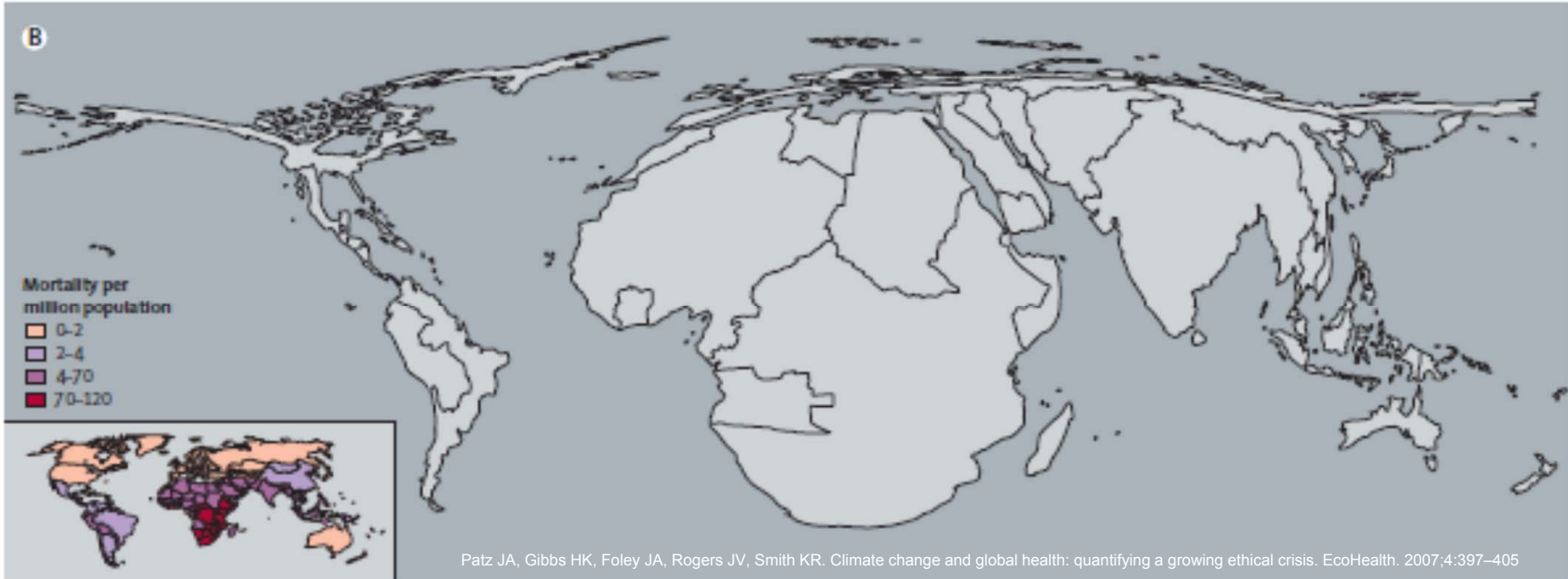
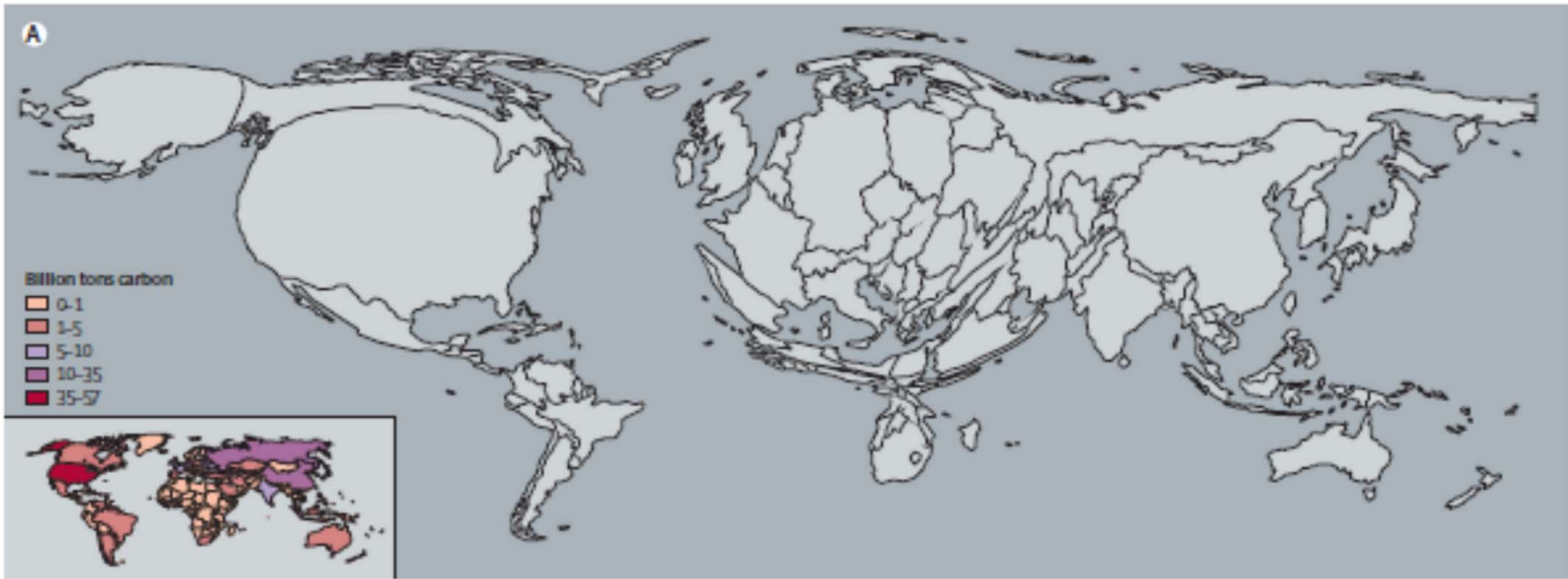
- World's oldest and largest independent organization representing associations of medical students internationally
- 115 National Member Organizations from 108 countries with over 1,2 million students represented worldwide
- In official relations with WHO

# Evidence of Health Risk

“Climate change is the biggest health thread of the 21st century” - The Lancet

- Each year:
  - Undernutrition kills 3.5 million
  - Poor water & sanitation kills > 2 million
  - Indoor air pollution kills > 2 million
  - Malaria kills 900,000
- Extreme weather events kill 60,000

WHO estimates that the climate change that has occurred since the 1970s already kills over 140,000 per year.



Patz JA, Gibbs HK, Foley JA, Rogers JV, Smith KR. Climate change and global health: quantifying a growing ethical crisis. *EcoHealth*. 2007;4:397-405

# Evidence of health opportunity

- "Health benefits from reduced air pollution as a result of actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions... may offset a substantial fraction of mitigation costs" – IPCC, 2007.
- E.g. Improved stoves and cleaner energy could reduce the 2 million annual deaths from indoor air pollution, and reduce warming effect.
- E.g. Sustainable urban transport – could cut heart disease by 10-25% in developed and developing countries.
- .....among many others.....



# The protection of health and welfare is one of the central rationales for reducing emissions

**UNFCCC Article 1:** “Adverse effects of climate change” : changes in the physical environment or biota resulting from climate change which have significant deleterious effects on the composition, resilience or productivity of natural and managed ecosystems or on the operation of socio-economic systems or on **human health and welfare**.

## Countries shall consider health implications of climate adaptation and mitigation.

**UNFCCC Article 4.1 (f):** All Parties...shall: ...f. Take climate change considerations into account, to the extent feasible, in their relevant social, economic and environmental policies and actions, and employ appropriate methods, for example impact assessments, formulated and determined nationally, with a view to minimizing adverse effects on the economy, on **public health** and on the quality of the environment, of projects and measures undertaken by them to mitigate or adapt to climate change;

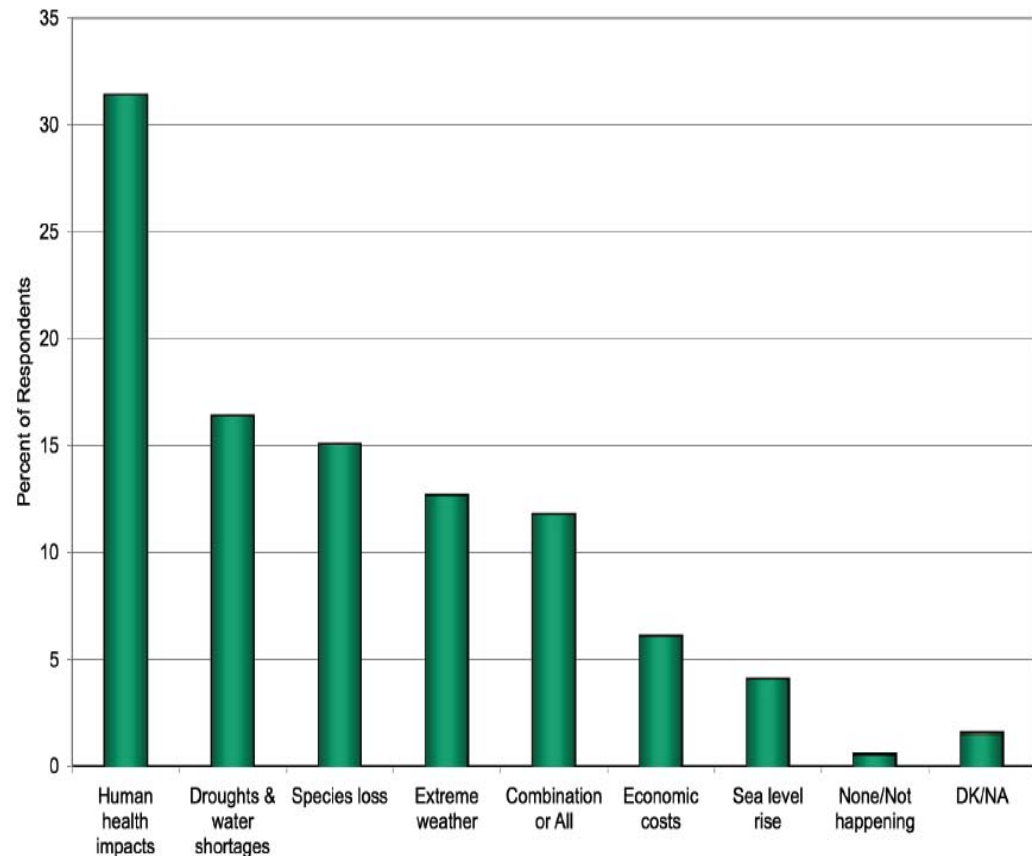


# Public demand

## Globescan poll in 30 countries

(UNDP 2007):

“Now I would like to ask you some questions about climate change, which is sometimes referred to as global warming or the greenhouse effect. Which ONE of the following possible impacts most concerns you personally, if any?”



## UNFCCC coverage of health in 2009

- 1) How many times was health mentioned in the 200 page draft agreement proposed in Copenhagen?
- 2) How many of the 323 side events focussed on health?
- 3) What percentage of global climate funds were allocated to health projects?
- 4) Of the 13 main economic models to inform climate mitigation decisions, how many incorporate health co-benefits?

ONE



## UNFCCC coverage of health more recently

- Survey of CoP16 delegates rates importance of health at 8.2/10
- 12 side events covering health
- Health as one of 5-6 key sectors covered in adaptation technical programmes
- Health highlighted in national submissions on overall vision, motivating ambition, adaptation, impacts of response measures to CoP-18

## IFMSA in all of this

- Policy
- Advocacy
- Activity

## Policy

- Climate Change and Health
- Environmentally Sustainable Healthcare Facilities

- **Medical students**, should take the lead in **educating the public** on the likely effects of climate change on health
- **Climate change** and its threat to health should be integrated within the **curricula** of medical schools worldwide
- **Awareness amongst the public** regarding the impact of the **health sector** on the environment must be created

# Advocacy

- COP
- Other UNFCCC meetings
- Rio +20
- Post 2015 agenda
- SDGs



## International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA) Submission on Article 6 and the New Delhi Work Programme

*In its conclusion on Article 6, the Subsidiary Body on Implementation invited Parties and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, as well as relevant stakeholders to submit to the secretariat, by 14th February 2012, information and views that may be relevant to the completion of the review of the amended New Delhi Work Programme. Additionally, it invited the aforementioned stakeholders to also submit their views on possible elements of a successor work programme on Article 6 of the Convention.<sup>1</sup>*

The IFMSA is a federation of medical students from 98 countries, on six continents, representing more than 1.3 million medical students worldwide. The IFMSA is recognized by the United Nations and its specialized agencies as the official voice of medical students worldwide.

IFMSA has been actively addressing and engaging with issues surrounding climate change for over 5 years. As a Federation we recognize that climate change is the greatest threat to global health in the 21st Century<sup>2</sup>, that it is directly attributable to human activity, and that the worst impacts of climate change must be prevented through mitigation.

Furthermore, we acknowledge the significant health co-benefits of mitigation strategies. A healthy low carbon lifestyle should always be the easiest choice, and in order to achieve this we believe in the implementation of Health in All Policies (HiAP), from transport and agriculture, to housing and energy.

Education is a central part of our work, in particular educating the public and informing policy-makers on specific health concerns. We believe that it is necessary and essential to educate and engage with our communities on the health impacts of climate change, as well as the co-benefits to their personal health arising from a low carbon lifestyle.

IFMSA has undertaken multiple activities in recent years, from awareness raising through national, regional and international workshops, to training advocates to campaign on climate change through local actions, such as calling for sustainable healthcare and engagement with national and international policy makers.

Recognizing the links between climate change and human health, and that the worst effects of



# Activities

- Projects
  - Think Global
  - Climate=Health
  - Healthy Planet
- Capacity building
  - International workshops
- Outreach
  - Webinar series
  - National projects



## THE LANCET

The Lancet, [Volume 378, Issue 9785](#), Pages 29 - 30, 2 July 2011  
doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(11)61018-0

### The importance of climate change to health

[S Singh a b](#), [U Mushtaq a](#), [C Holm-Hansen a](#), [D Milan a](#), [A Cheung a](#), [N Watts a](#)

## Key message

Health impacts are among the most significant damages from climate change – and health can be a driving force for public engagement in climate solutions.



## Key message

- Health can be a driving force for public engagement in climate solutions
- Engagement of youth works
- Multi modal approach in regards to education is more efficient