



# CENTER FOR HEALTH AND THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

## HISTORY

The Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School, the first such center at a medical school in the United States and an official Collaborating Center of the U. N. Environment Programme, was founded in 1996 because of concern that the relationship between human health and the health of the global environment was not, in general, well understood either by policy-makers or the public.

## MISSION

The mission of the Center is to help people understand that our health, and that of our children, depends on the health of the environment, and that we must do everything we can to protect it.

## PROGRAMS

To fulfill its mission, the Center organizes a number of programs for physicians, scientists, policy-makers, the media, and the general public.

- o **Medical and Secondary Education:** The Center designed the course Human Health and Global Environmental Change to educate the next generation of physicians about the global environmental influences on human health and adapted a version for high school students.
- o **Policy-Maker Education:** The Center holds an annual, two-day intensive course for the U.S. Congress on environmental change issues, drawing staff from key offices and committees from both houses and both parties. The Center also regularly updates congressional staff by holding briefings in the House and Senate.
- o **Sustaining Life: How Human Health Depends on Biodiversity** will be the most comprehensive examination yet available on the subject of how ecosystems and other species contribute to human health.
- o **Healthy Oceans, Healthy Humans** aims to create educational materials to inform the general public of their human health connections to the ocean environment.
- o **Climate Change Futures: Health, Economic, and Ecological Dimensions**, a ground-breaking study on the physical and health risks of climate instability.
- o **Healthy and Sustainable Food** aims to increase public awareness about food choices that are healthy for humans, and healthy for the environment.
- o **General Public and Media Outreach:** The Center hosts numerous activities designed for a wide range of audiences to increase awareness about human health and global environmental change.

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