

Environmental Health: Combatting Global Warming & Pollution

written by Saarani Vengadesen | 01/03/2023

Environmental health is an aspect of human health determined by physical, chemical, biological, social and psychological environmental factors. A healthy environment leads to healthy people. One should be careful about recycling and disposing of materials. We rely on our earth to supply clean water, breathable air, and healthy food, all of which can be put in danger by the sloppy throwing away of rubbish.

Therefore, green practices aim to increase society's awareness of the consequences of continuing as we are now. One of these is environmental diseases- respiratory problems from pollution and infectious diseases from global warming; as such, 5R is introduced to society. According to the 5Rs, four actions should be taken before 'recycling': refuse, reduce, reuse and repurpose.

The [United Nations](#) (UN) defines sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The UN includes fighting poverty, hunger, and lack of water and food as essential sustainable development goals. Fossil fuels negatively impact the environment, while green strategies with renewable energies and materials remain the best and most reliable approach to combat environmental issues. Anyhow, it is imperative to plan for the future, a crucial aspect of environmental consciousness.

Global warming and climate change have happened due to human activities since the pre-industrial period. Our environment is under stress due to factors such as temperature increment, water scarcity, increased heat waves, drought, weed and insect invasions, severe storm damage, and salt invasion- to mention a few. Recently, examples of flooding, heat waves, droughts, rising sea levels, and erratic rainfall have been observed in the United States, Asia, and Europe linked to climate change.

According to the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), climate change is responsible for at least 150,000 deaths annually, expected to double by 2030. Unfortunately, the poorest and most vulnerable countries and those who have contributed the least to the problem will be amongst the hardest hit by global warming, just like the devastating floods in Pakistan. This is worrisome and the most pressing threat to our planet. Therefore, there is a need to instil care and create and chart (3C) the trend of environmental pollution and its effect on human health by reducing the carbon footprint in our daily lives.

While we understand the efforts of the United Nations and other notable organisations worldwide, we want to seize this golden opportunity to make a passionate call to all countries, particularly the Malaysian government, to take action with immediate clarity to save our beautiful planet. An instance of such actions is funding more research activities, particularly in environmental management, such as CO₂ transformation into value-added products and collaborating with businesses to cut carbon emissions.

It is also necessary to promote policies that encourage clean and renewable energy and enforce it accordingly. More awareness and campaigns on the use of synthetic plastic in mass media, to the extent of sensitising ignorant citizens on the negative impact of environmental

pollution and global warming.

All these efforts will assist the citizens and nature in adapting to climate change. By implementing a small change in our daily habits, like saying no to single-use plastics, smaller carbon footprints, and transforming concentrated atmospheric CO₂ into hydrocarbon fuels, the number of toxins released into the atmosphere will be reduced drastically. This effort is aligned with Target 12.5 by the United Nations to ensure sustainable consumption of natural resources through reduced waste generation, particularly single-use packaging in daily life, by 2030. Future generations will benefit from improved air, fewer landfills, and more renewable energy sources.

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