



The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change

For Prelims: WHO, WMO, Covid-19, Climate Change, Air Pollution, Heat Exposure, COP-27.

For Mains: Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change, Paris Agreement.

Why in News?

Recently a report was released titled **Lancet countdown on health and climate change: health at the mercy of fossil fuels**, showing that from 2000-2004 to 2017-2021, **heat-related deaths increased by 55% in India**.

- This report comes ahead of this year's **United Nations climate change conference (COP27)**, to be held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt.
- The report represents the **work of 99 experts from 51 institutions**, including the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) and the [World Meteorological Organization \(WMO\)](#).

What is Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change Report?

- The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change, published annually, is an **international, multidisciplinary collaboration, dedicated to monitoring the evolving health profile of climate change**, and providing an independent assessment of the delivery of commitments made by governments worldwide under the [Paris Agreement](#).
- The countries considered in the modelling study represent **50% of the world's population and 70% of the world's emissions** – Brazil, China, Germany, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, South Africa, the UK and the US.
- The Lancet Countdown report was established following the 2015 Lancet Commission on Health and Climate Change.
- It tracks **43 indicators across five key domains**:
 - Climate Change impacts, Exposures and Vulnerability; adaptation, Planning, and resilience for health; mitigation actions and health co-benefits; economics and finance and public and political engagement.

What are the Findings of the Report?

- **Subsidies Causing Global Problems**:
 - Subsidies to fossil fuel consumption in **many countries are causing global problems, including deterioration of air quality**, decline in food output and increased risk of infectious disease linked to higher carbon emissions.
 - In 2021, 80% of the countries reviewed provided some form of fossil fuel subsidy, totaling USD 400 billion.
 - In 2019, India spent a net USD 34 billion on fossil fuel subsidies, accounting for 5% of total national health spending.
 - **Over 3,30,000 people died in India in 2020** as a result of exposure to [fossil fuel pollutants](#).

- **Effects of Rising Temperature on Age Groups:**
 - From 2012-2021, infants under one year old experienced an average of 72 million more person-days of heatwaves per year, compared to 1985-2005.
 - **Adults over the age of 65** in India experienced 301 million more person-days during the same time period.
 - From 2000-2004 to 2017-2021, heat-related deaths **increased by 55% in India**.
- **Impact on GDP:**
 - In 2021, Indians lost **167.2 billion potential labour hours** due to heat exposure with income losses equivalent to about 5.4% of national GDP.
- **Dengue Transmission:**
 - From 1951-1960 to 2012-2021, the number of months suitable for dengue transmission by Aedes Aegypti rose by 1.69%, reaching 5.6 months each year.

What are the Recommendations?

- Improvement in air quality will help to **prevent deaths resulting from exposure** to fossil fuel-derived particulate matter.
- Develop climate solutions that are **proportionate to the scale of the problem**. The climate crisis is endangering not only the health of the planet, but also the health of people everywhere, through toxic air pollution, decreased food security, increased risks of infectious disease outbreaks, extreme heat, drought, floods, etc.
- Therefore, **governments should pay more attention to and invest more resources** in environmental protection.
- Burning of dirty fuels **needs to be minimized as soon as possible** to reduce the accompanying health impacts.

What are Initiatives taken by India for Controlling Air Pollution?

- [System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research \(SAFAR\) Portal](#)
- [Air Quality Index](#)
- [Graded Response Action Plan](#) (for Delhi)
- [BS-VI Vehicles](#)
- [Push for Electric Vehicles \(EVs\)](#)
- [New Commission for Air Quality Management](#)
- [Turbo Happy Seeder \(THS\) Machine](#) for reducing stubble burning.
- [National Air Quality Monitoring Programme \(NAMP\)](#)
- [National Solar Mission](#)
- [National Wind-Solar Hybrid Policy 2018](#)

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